



From Our Past to Our Present

Date: October 27, 2024

Text: Matt 11:28-30; Hebrews 10:25; Matt 6:33; Philippians 4:6

BIG IDEA

There are four primary experiences that lead to growth in the Christian walk: the sin experience, the truth experience, the life experience, and the prayer experience. These four experiences teach us the disciplines necessary for our faith to be activated and, in turn, for us to grow spiritually. Experiencing sin leads to the revelation of what repentance is in our relationship with God. Experiencing truth teaches us dependence on the Holy Spirit. Experiencing life teaches us how to surrender our scars to God. Experiencing prayer teaches us how to live a life in the eternal realm instead of limiting ourselves to only what we can see in this world.

Conversation Starter

- What positive experience in your life has shaped your faith the most? Now, what negative experience in your life has shaped your faith the most? Which one marked you the most?



COMMENTARY #1

(Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV) “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Discussion Questions

1. Is repentance a process or a choice? Can it be both?
2. Having a conversation with God about your own repentance can be intimidating and overwhelming. How do you find strength in the Holy Spirit to pray about your own repentance before God when He points out an area of sin?
3. There is such a thing as godly sorrow. We will grieve our own sins as God transforms our hearts to look more like His. God does not intend for the grief to become guilt or shame. What is one grief, burden, or shame that you have been holding on to?
4. His burden is light; He never meant for you to carry such heavy burdens alone. What steps can you take to begin surrendering that burden to Him?



COMMENTARY #2

(Hebrews 10:25 NIV) “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Discussion Questions

1. Corporate worship has a purpose in our faith. What do you think it is?
2. What is the most powerful worship experience you have ever encountered?
3. Where do you go in your life to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit most deeply?

*If you have never experienced His presence, take a moment to let your group pray for this gift on your behalf.

COMMENTARY #3

(Matthew 6:33 NIV) “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”



Discussion Questions

1. There is a very real and feisty part of all of us that loves the world. The Bible often refers to it as our “old man” when it contrasts that part of who we are with the “new man” part that God is “making new.” How do you surrender that part of who you are to God?
2. What does it look like in everyday life to “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness”?
3. Many people think you only surrender your life to God on the day you accept Christ. But the reality is that a healthy Christian will have to surrender over and over for the rest of his/ her life on this earth. How often do you surrender your life to God?

COMMENTARY #4

(Philippians 4:6 NKJV) “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”



Discussion Questions

1. Why is it so difficult for many people to pray out loud?
2. What physical posture do you prefer to pray in? (On your knees, eyes open or shut, standing, in a chair, in bed going to sleep at night, etc.)
3. A.W. Tozer, a great Biblical scholar, summed up our relationship with God this way: “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”

How do you picture God hearing what you have to say when you pray? (*Is he an angry God? Is he gentle? Are you crying out at His feet? Are you face to face with Jesus?*)

GOING DEEPER

1. Rank these four experiences in order of importance. Which one is the most powerful?
2. What kind of experiences does the American dream promise will shape your life powerfully?
3. What kind of experiences do movies teach us will shape our lives powerfully?



4. What are some ways you can witness to the world around you as you live differently than the rest of our culture?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Blog – [The Most Important Thing About You](#), Pastor Ben Sadler

Blog - [How Do You Pray In Days Like These & When Life's Really Hard?](#), Ann Voskamp

Sermon – ["That's My King"](#), Dr. S. M. Lockridge

GROUP ACTIVITY

Talk as a group about how you can practice all four of these disciplines in your faith every week when you meet. Everyone can help lead in this effort.

1. Experiencing sin leads to the revelation of what repentance is in our relationship with God.

Let one person pray a prayer of repentance each during each group meeting on behalf of our church for the culture around us.



2. Experiencing truth teaches us dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Let one person choose a worship song to play for the group to draw near to the presence of the Holy Spirit. Singing can be optional. Being still in His presence is the point.

3. Experiencing life teaches us how to surrender our scars to God.

Let one person pass out small slips of paper and something to write with during the next meeting. Bring the trash can in the room to the center of your group. Pray corporately or on your own and confess to God what needs to be surrendered to Him. Then, throw it away in the trashcan to symbolize letting go.

4. Experiencing prayer teaches us how to live a life in the eternal realm instead of limiting ourselves to only what we can see in this world.

Allow one person in the group to pray for the prayer requests of everyone or the help of the group during the meeting.

Through these disciplines, God is teaching us how to be the Church.