



Week Three: The Future

Chronophobia: irrational fear of the future.

Heraclitus a Greek Philosopher is quoted as saying; “change is the only constant in life.” We as Christians know this isn’t true for “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

Hebrews 13:8 ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

But everything else does change and it can keep us up at night worrying but we don’t have to.

Top 3 fears for adults are the following

- 1) *Fear of public speaking*
- 2) *Fear of death*
- 3) *Fear of death while publicly speaking. LOL*

It was September 1971 the start of 8th grade at O’Neill Junior High in Downers Grove Illinois. A year I wasn’t looking forward to. See I was the 2nd smallest boy in school, was tutored for being a slow learner, could read at a 4th grade level and didn’t speak unless forced to do so as a result of stuttering and not able to clearly pronounce the letter R. Yet alone all the puberty issues going on with my voice changing; and yet I had to take Speech class to graduate Junior High. I was not looking forward to being the laughing stock at school. The thought did cross my mind to run away but to where. Then my parents sat me down and said not to worry. To just do my best and pick a topic that I enjoyed just walk up to that podium and look at the audience as if they were all sitting there in only their underwear. To this day I don’t know if anyone realized why I was smiling so much when I reached the podium; but I do remember receiving my very first “A”. Since then I have spoken at numerous church and civic groups across the United States. Something I enjoy and yet back in 8th grade the future looked scary, frightening and I lost much sleep over something I needn’t worry about.

SO START RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE... RIGHT NOW.

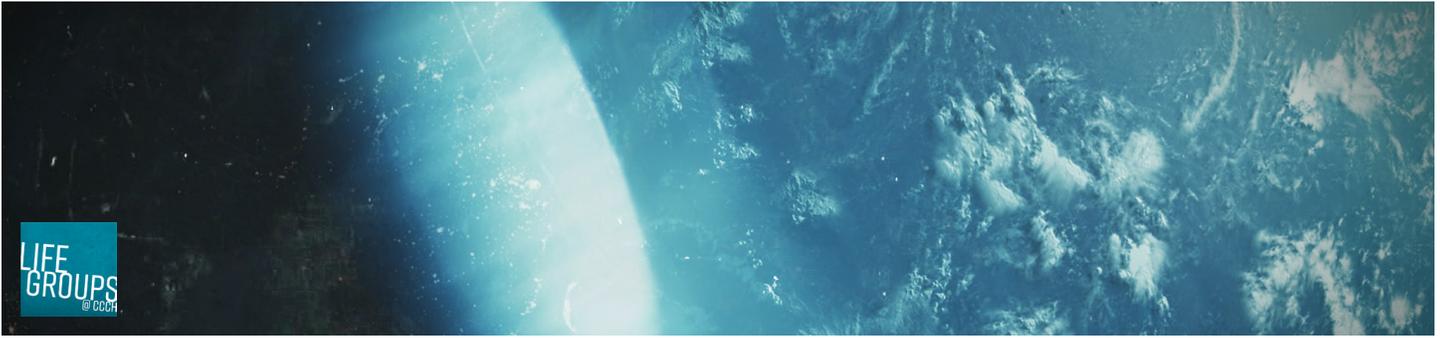
Joshua 1:9 ⁹ “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Matthew 6:34 ³⁴ “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Why don’t we trust in the Lord for our daily needs?

Why do we suffer each night in not trusting God?

God taught us how to pray **Matthew 6:9-11**



I must say I heard one of the best Easter messages this past April 1. Brother Matthew spoke on the Saturday of Holy week where there was no HOPE. Today we have the scriptures to tell us the whole story but, for the 12 apostles, disciples and family members who had gathered behind locked doors they were scared of what the future would hold. Were they going to be hunted down, arrested, stoned, etc.

Have someone read **Acts 1:1-11**

Key verse: Acts 1:8 ⁸“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

We have been given a task and that is to share the Gospel of Christ Jesus and what is the best way to do this?

Acts 4:32 ³²“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.”

The Church is the HOPE for the future, how can we keep this future going strong?

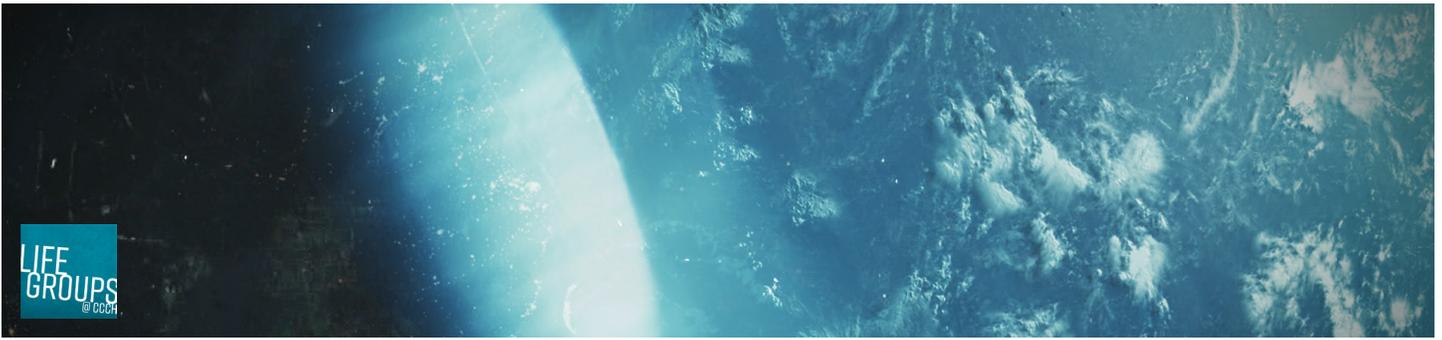
Matthew 5:16 ¹⁶“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

How is your light shining?

Express your gift: Put together a divine to do list for yourself, family and church.

What opportunities do we have that we were made for?

Nothing is like the Church of Jesus Christ in getting ordinary people to do extraordinary things to help expand the Church. People doing good deeds and pointing people to Jesus are just some areas we help expand the Church for the future.



Listed below are 4 main areas that the Church needs to focus on if we are to keep the Church going strong into the future. There might even be more your group can add to these basics.

Take the rest of the time to discuss these 4 main ideas and how they affect you, your family and your future.

- 1) Celebrate what we are doing right and well.
Adding new members, adding new programs, missions, etc.
- 2) Entering a new season of multiplied impact
Expansion vs explosion for God
Connection/ life groups.
Multiple location for ministry, inner city, suburb.
- 3) Other Church's need our help
To reignite and reboot Church's in our area that are in decline.
4,000 church's a year close.
80% of church's have a declining membership
50% of church's had no new member conversions last year.
What are we to do?
- 4) The next generation needs our investment
Believe in the youth of today and expand programs to reach youth in community.
Promote young leaders within our church communities.
Expand youth outreach programs

There is nothing like the Church of Jesus Christ when the Church is working right. We are the light of the world. What are you doing to expand the Church?

Are you all in on your Church's vision?