

life group study guide

January 15, 2017

The Pursuit of God

In reading the information from Matt's sermon so many thoughts came to my mind: my time of coming to know Christ, the journey, the fear, the acceptance, the decision. The things that followed the decision, learning what it truly meant to follow Christ. To, Surrender.

Surrender my life, surrender to God.

Of course, as I learned these things, I did not yet truly know what God wanted from us, from me. I knew something about the bible, some key verses from growing up in a church, doing "things" in church. But I didn't really know the scriptures. I certainly didn't know the meaning of surrender... Let's work backwards- This is the lead paragraph from Matt on today's message:

What is church all about? Where do I start with God? How should church and bible impact my life? Whether you've been in church your whole life or have never stepped foot in one, these are all questions we need to ask. We all start at the same spot when it comes to Jesus, the Bible, and Church.

Let's unpack that statement- But before we do, what is it we as Christians really bring to the non-Christian? What do we offer them, what do we show them? What is our surrender- Have we surrendered all to the glory of God, or just parts.? Can we talk about surrender from a position of knowledge, or experience? Or both?

Oswald, in My utmost for His Highest says this: Our motive for surrender should not be for any personal gain at all. We have become so self-centered that we go to God only for something from Him, and not for God Himself. It is like saying, "No, Lord, I don't want you; I want myself. But I do want You to clean me and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I want to be on display in Your showcase so I can say, 'This is what God has done for me.' " ... *Genuine total surrender is a personal sovereign preference for Jesus Christ Himself.* – Emphasis mine.

Surrender, have we? Before we go forth to share Christ, have we surrendered?

--Back to that statement- let's put ourselves into the mind of a non-Christian. Perhaps someone searching, wondering, no someone not searching...

Q- What is church all about-- Really, that's the question. Not what do you do there, or when is it, or even what kind of church you attend, but what is it all about?

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If Matt followed the information shared- then he also spoke of Faith, Repentance, and maybe even Baptism. So- with these as backgrounds, all in their own way heavy subjects for the non-Christian- The next question may be one of the most important:

Q-Where do I start with God? How do we describe that? What is “required” or what is God looking for? What are we, they, looking for?

I love this next statement from the information shared: *We all start at the same spot when it comes to Jesus, the Bible, and Church.*

How true is that statement! Q- How do we share our background- our first steps, our searching?

Back to us as Christians- The message title is Surrender-

Q- What does that mean to us, to you?

Q- How do we surrender, what are some practical things you might tell someone asking what surrender means, or how to surrender?

If we say something like **Matthew 16:24**- *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."*

Q- How do we share that with a non-Christian so they might not only understand, but embrace it?

Q- Have you embraced it?

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