

IT'S NOT YOUR BIRTHDAY



Week #1: "Wheelin' & Dealin'!"

What does God want from us?

Monday, October 28 Read Psalm 37

Part of what keeps us from paying attention to God and His Will is that we are distracted and worried by the challenges, pressures and demands of the world around us. Notice how the psalmist alternates between assurances of God's presence and faithfulness and the ultimate demise of the evil and wicked. What blessings and encouragements pull your attention back to God? _____

Tuesday, October 29 Read Micah 6:1-8

Micah presents an argument between an irate God and a people who have deluded themselves into believing they are actually doing what pleases God. Reading between the lines what are the people actually doing and what corrective does God order? _____

What does this tell us about God? _____

Try memorizing v.8 as this will be our foundational verse for the whole series. Reflect on how you might actually live that verse out in your daily activities.

Wednesday, October 30 Read Proverbs 3:1-12

The heart of this passage is vv.5-6. Note that "trust in the Lord" is further defined by specific lifestyle choices (loyalty, generosity, sacrificial giving, etc.). Why are these aspects necessary to a deeper relationship with God?

How does this proverbial advice line up with the words of Micah from yesterday's reading?

Thursday, October 31 Matthew 22:34-40 & Luke 9:23

Matthew 22:40 is very important here. It reminds us that everything we do as disciples, every rule, doctrine, goal or activity must be built on the "Great Commandments" listed here. While loving God and neighbor may sound easy, why does Jesus later (in the Luke passage) link being faithful to God's commands with carrying our cross?

What specific sacrifice and commitment does being truly faithful demand of you and how are you responding?



Friday, November 1 Read Ephesians 4:25-5:2

If all you've read and reflected on this week is true, the beginning of this passage with "so then..." reminds us that it is not enough to simply *know* what God wants. We must respond faithfully as well. While Paul's list of activities here certainly doesn't cover everything we could do, how would you sum up the general theme of what God expects of us in our discipleship response? _____

What challenges does that pose for you personally? _____

Saturday, November 2 Read John 15:18-20

It's important to recognize that the outside world will never appreciate nor respect a fully lived Christian life. Despite its supposed root, how does the culture's celebration of Christmas often contradict the desires of God as you've reflected on this week? _____

Where do you feel pressure to conform to the world?

Sermon Notes for: "Wheelin' & Dealin'!" October 27, 2019

1. We honor God most when we passionately and sacrificially seek to live into His Will.



Doing God's Will isn't about doing what we have to do to get what we want!

Small Group Discussion Guide

for Week #1

Oct.28-Nov3



Part I: Sharing Our Experience of Christmas

1. Discuss the following questions with your group.

- Name your favorite Christmas present from three years ago. Did you remember it? If you did, how long did it take to think of it? What does this say about the real importance of many of the gifts we give and get?

2. Read John 15:18-20 and discuss the questions from Saturday's reading.

Part II. What Does God Want?

1. Read Micah 6:1-18 and discuss the questions from Tuesday (10/29). Then take a look at the three things God desires and try to give some examples of what each would look like if we were to practice them in our daily lives. Be as specific as possible.

Doing Justice:

Loving Kindness:

Walking humbly with God:

2. How do the ways we celebrate Christmas truly honor Christ? How do they fail to honor Him? What ways do we contribute to honoring him and in what ways do we further the insult?

Part III. Some Christmas Reflections

1. Discuss these questions with your group. What is your favorite part of Christmas and why? How much time and resources do you truly spend on that part compared to all the other things you do? How much money do you typically spend on Christmas gifts? If you were to cut that amount in half, would your Christmas be less enjoyable? Why or why not?

2. What's one thing you would change about the way you celebrate Christmas? Why? Is it possible to change it? Why or why not?