

What Do You Expect?

Pastor Clyde Hamer | October 22, 2017

Ezekiel 13:6

Personal Connection (25 minutes)

Icebreaker

Q. We all have faced times in our lives when we wished we could change something about ourselves. What did you want to change about yourself when you were little, and what do you wish you could change now?

Ups and Downs

Q. How did it go last week? Share with the group some of your highs and lows, and offer praise to God for the doors that he has opened.

Praying for each other

Reflect on the questions above and share with the group. Take some time now and appoint someone in the group to pray for spiritual strength and guidance to grow in areas of vulnerability.

Sharing Christ

Q. Were you able to share Christ with anyone this week?

Review Last Sunday's *What Now?*

Last week we discussed our need to respond to brothers and sisters in Christ with a spirit of restoration when they repent and return to Christ.

Q. Has the Lord helped you to think about fallen Christian brothers and sisters differently?

Q. If you are carrying a burden of pain from your past, has the Lord been helping you work through forgiveness? Share as you feel comfortable.

Digging Deeper (30 minutes)

This Week's Key Concept:

Profound transformation is possible, but only through the power of Jesus Christ.

Read Ezekiel 13:6

Ezekiel's warning was directed at the false prophets whose messages were not from God: they were lies intended to increase their popularity, make the people happy, and give them a false sense of security.

Q. Do you often observe people who are incredibly happy but recognize that it's built on a false sense of security?

Q. Can you think of a time when you thought the Lord was telling you something, only to discover it was your own desires or Satan enticing you? What did you learn from that experience? How did it impact your relationship with Christ?

Read Galatians 5:16-17

We all face highs and lows in our walk with Christ. Sometimes, our hearts are on fire with the Holy Spirit. Yet, other times, our emotions deceive us into thinking that Christ is nowhere near, that he has abandoned us.

Q. How have your desires changed over time? In particular, how do they compare during times when you are on fire for Christ versus when you feel disconnected from his presence or love?

Q. Think about a time when you struggled to feel Christ's presence. How did it impact your ability to follow him, to listen for his guidance, to minister to others, to be ministered to by others? Everyone goes through similar low times in their faith journey. Consider reaching out to your LIFE Group during those times of disconnection.

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things."

The Holy Spirit, sent by Christ to indwell and guide his followers, causes us to desire the fruit described in these verses. At the same time, be careful not to confuse your subjective feelings with the Spirit's leading. Being led by the Holy Spirit involves the desire to hear, the readiness to obey God's word, and the sensitivity to discern between your feelings and his promptings.

Q. When the fruit of the Holy Spirit is developing in your life, do you recall simultaneously struggling with selfish desires? Why do you think that is so? Take time to think about this.

Impact Questions

Q. How can we be more like Christ? What kinds of activities encourage a growing relationship with him?

Romans 8:29 "For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters."

God's ultimate goal for us is to make us like Christ! As we become more and more like him, we discover our true selves, the persons we were created to be. God's purpose for people was not an afterthought; it was settled before the foundation of the world. People are to serve and honor God. If you believe in Christ, you can rejoice in the fact that God has always known you. God's love is eternal! His wisdom and power are supreme. He will guide and protect you until you one day stand in his presence!

What now? (15 minutes)

This week, pray for transparency in your relationship with Christ. Ask him to shed light on **your** deepest desires and the expectations you have for **your** life. After his response, ask him to reveal **HIS** expectations for your life. Pray for the journey ahead as you seek **HIS** will in your life!

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

Please share your prayer requests and praises, so that your LIFE Group may lift you up, in neighborly affection.

Please pray for expanding Christ's Kingdom through your relationships, in our congregation, to the community, and in distant places.