

Life Group Notes

These notes are to serve you as you lead your group.

*Please feel free to select the passages and **only use the questions which are most relevant to your group** and for the way you want to lead the session. (There are more questions here than you'll need)*

- *Please choose (or adapt) the questions which you believe will **bring about the most honest, faith-building and life changing conversations**, and add others if you want to.*
- *The readings and questions develop from one section to the next. Please **take time to move through the ones you want to use, giving time for discussion and sharing - ideally leading to a response to God's word.***

Life Group Notes

Theme: #Blessed

How does God choose who to bless?

This week we continued our theme of 'Blessed' and saw that when it comes to choosing who will carry his blessing to the world, God is looking for people who will trust him, rather than trying to take his blessing on their own terms.

This choice of TAKE vs TRUST is one which is repeated throughout scripture, from the garden of Eden onwards.

Introduction

1. **Out of all of the characters mentioned in the sermon, did any surprise you or stand out to you?**
2. **How easy do you find it to trust God? Can you think of examples?**
3. **Why is it often so difficult for us to trust God?**

Read Genesis 3:1-7

Note the key words in the first part of Genesis 3:6: The woman “**saw** that the fruit of the tree was **good for food** and also **desirable** for gaining wisdom, she **took** some and **ate** it.” Despite God instructing the people not to eat of the tree, they thought they knew better, and decided that they could eat because the fruit seemed good in their eyes, and it was desirable to them. They took what looked good in their own eyes, rather than trusting God to provide for them in his time.

4. Here we see how easy it is to become convinced that we can reframe God's clear instructions to mean something different to what he actually said. **How often do we repeat this reframing pattern in our lives to justify what we want to do?**
[I suggest we do it all the time!]
5. **How might we become more honest with ourselves, and with God, so that we notice when we are seeking to justify actions that go against what God wants for us?**
6. **Where are you being challenged to trust God, especially when the alternative looks desirable or 'good to your eyes'?**
7. **How do you work at developing and growing in trusting God?**

Read Matthew 26:36-46

Here we read of Jesus, the ultimate 'blessed One', at a time when he is in prayer before his arrest, trials and crucifixion.

- 8. What does it show you, that Jesus went willingly to Gethsemane, and then to the cross?**
- 9. In verse 38 we read of Jesus' pain, struggle and turmoil. Using your own words, how would you describe what he is experiencing?**
- 10. In verses 39 & 42, Jesus prays similar prayers, ending each with a commitment that God's will should be done. How does this simple act speak to your faith? [Jesus has passed the test! He trusted God, rather than taking what he wanted]**

In verse 46, Jesus tells the disciples to rise and go to meet his betrayer. In saying this, he displays none of the turmoil that he's just experienced. Jesus has been honest and open with his disciples about how he is feeling (v38; 41) so is not hiding his emotions, yet in 46 he appears to have come to a settled place through taking things to his Father.

- 11. How is Jesus' example of dealing with tough issues in God's presence an example and a challenge to us? [I wonder if we tend to talk more to others and less to God. Jesus does the opposite, and shows that this works.]**

Final Questions

- 12. What area of your faith are you feeling most challenged in currently?**
- 13. What in your life is most encouraging to your faith right now?**

Alternative Passages

If you would like to study different passages to those used on Sunday so as to broaden the study, there are many examples of times when people trusted God, and many of these would be suitable alternatives to the ones shown here.

Examples include:

Many from the book of Daniel - e.g. Daniel 3, Daniel 6.

Application

It may be that a time of worship, reflection, or response is appropriate for your group, thanking God for all that he has given, and for his grace and patience in waiting for us to trust him.