

WEIRD LIFE GROUP (LESSON 2)

LIVING TO GIVE NOT TO GET

Introduction: In this lesson we learn that God's new normal is discovering joy and fulfillment, not by being absorbed with getting for ourselves but by being willing to forget ourselves and focus on giving our lives to make a difference for God and others.

Our key passage is from Matthew 16:21-26, when Peter urges Jesus to save his life and not give it. Jesus rebukes Satan's attempt to tempt Him to live for Himself and teaches the disciples the only way to life is to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow His example. He assures them that by losing their lives they will find it.

1. Can you describe a time when you discovered the happiest way to live comes as you forget about yourself and focused on giving to others?

2. Can you give an example when you were your own worst enemy, when putting yourself first sabotaged your joy, meaning, and blessing.

Some examples:

- a. You let self-interest get in the way of listening, caring, and showing God's love.
 - b. You allowed some kind of irritation cause you to be harsh or hurtful in a relationship
 - c. You became absorbed in your problems through worry, complaining, self-pity, or embracing fear in a way that took you into depression or discouragement.
 - d. You were too busy doing your own thing and missed an opportunity to add value or blessing to others.
 - e. You stubbornly won an argument and lost a friend.
 - d. Other:
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3. Pastor Dale talked about freedom that comes when you truly give up control to God. He used the illustration of people like Jacob, Moses, Jonah, and Paul. What is an example of "getting over yourself" and finding **freedom**?

Examples:

- a. Giving up the burden of being in control of your problems, you found peace.
- b. Discovering that the thing you were willing to give up was not the thing that was going to bring you ultimate fulfillment and happiness. What God wanted you to have was better.
- c. Giving up your selfish will, you discovered God's greater purpose and mission for your life.
- d. Giving up fighting the battle yourself, you found that God fought for you in a way that was so much better.

- e. Giving up your selfish pursuit, you had the chance to grow much closer in your relationships with others.
 - f. Surrendering your questions and disappointments, you found the grace not to be stuck in the past but to have peace with your past and let God take the sad things and use them for good.
4. What is one of the keys to getting over yourself that especially applies to you?
- a. Accepting by faith that to die to yourself isn't something you have to try to do, but was accomplished for you on the cross, that you have been crucified with Christ and no longer live, but Christ lives in you (Galatians 2:20)
 - b. Surrendering the disappointments and things you don't understand as seeds in God's hands where He will bring resurrection miracles
 - c. Being grateful is one of the fastest ways to get over yourself
 - d. Changing your focus from "what can I get" to "who can I serve" will free you to live in purpose and joy