

Guardrails

Week 4 - Mike Curl

“Insurance Gap”

Icebreaker: Do you have any plans for St. Patrick’s Day?

Topics for Discussion: (there will be a fair bit of reading this week)

- Read **Colossians 3:1-11**
 - Discuss some some verses or themes that stand out to you.
- Read **Matthew 6:24-34**
 - What are the implications of this verse on how you handle your money? Your possessions? Time? Efforts? Relationships?
 - What do you think about the command (yes, it is a command) to not worry?
- Read **Philippians 4:10-20**
 - This passage is a rare one for Paul. He is over-the-moon pleased with the people of Philippi. Not because they sent money (that is simply the vessel that was needed), but because they are generous. For eternity, the small church in Philippi will be remembered as a generous people.
 - How would you want to be remembered in eternity? Do you think you can affect that now?

Things to Consider:

- We all need guardrails because we are all on a path to a destination, and life throws curveballs and bad weather our way all the time. Sometimes we even wander out of bounds because we make poor choices. A guardrail is there to direct and protect us.
- The destination we seek is a better life and a better life can **only** be found in Jesus. But it turns out Jesus is also the path to Himself. Without focusing on Jesus constantly (the path) you won’t reach Jesus (the destination).
- On Sunday we focused on **greed**. Greed is an impediment to keeping friends (the accountability we need to stay on the path) and to focusing on Jesus (the path and destination we want).
 - We define greed as a set of behaviors and emotions that focus on ourselves at the expense of others. It is a me-first way of living.

“The assumption that it is all for my consumption.”
 - Greed also stops us from receiving the blessings of God, because our hands are so tightly held around what we already have we can’t pick up or catch what he is sending us.

- As a group, discuss some areas where jealousy of others, a lack of trust in God, or a general feeling of out-of-control can make us “greedy”.
 - *Remember that greediness is not just “Scrooge McDuck” level hoarding.*

Going Deeper:

- Combating greed in our own lives will be one of the hardest things we attempt (no joke) —but it must be attempted! In order for us to fully experience the life God has for us, we must focus on him above all else.
 - What do you have your hands tightly closed around? Another way to think of this: if someone asked you to share or give up something you have (money, time, stuff, etc.), what does your mind see and immediately say, “No way!”
 - By necessity the habit of generosity will start small. It will hurt, and you will try to talk yourself out of it. Stick with it! You’ll find it’s easier and easier to give when you have a habit of generosity—but good habits take time to build.
- Discuss ways your group can help each other to be more generous.

Prayer: Collect needs and requests for prayers from the group, and don’t forget to give praise and thanks to our most precious Lord and savior!