

SMALL GROUPS

This week's message challenged us to move beyond simply surviving pressure and into the purpose God has for us. After recognizing pressure in week one and releasing it in week two, the question now becomes: what do we do next? This guide will help your group wrestle honestly with what it means to stop waiting and start moving in obedience to God.

Key Takeaways

- Comfort has become one of the greatest enemies of our calling.
- God does not lighten our load so we can become comfortable. He lightens our load so we can live with purpose and urgency.
- A distracted heart will miss God's direction.
- The enemy does not always need to make you bad. He just needs to make you busy.
- You cannot drive toward God's future while constantly looking in your rearview mirror.
- Your past can explain you, but it does not have to define you.
- Faith does not require a map. Faith requires movement.
- Information without obedience produces deception.
- Knowledge impresses people. Obedience transforms people.
- One of Satan's favorite words is later. One of God's favorite words is today.

Opening Question

Take a few minutes to check in with your group before diving into the material.

- How did you feel walking out of last week's message? Did anything shift in you during the week that followed?

Discussion Questions

Section 1: A Distracted Heart Will Miss God's Direction

The sermon pointed to Luke 21:34, where Jesus warns that our hearts can be weighed down not only by sin, but by the anxieties and distractions of everyday life. The point was made that direction requires attention, and that a crowded mind makes it difficult to recognize a clear voice.

1. When you honestly assess your daily life, what is getting most of your attention right now? How is that affecting the other areas of your life?
2. The sermon suggested that the enemy's strategy is less about making us evil and more about making us unavailable. Have you seen this play out in your own life? What does that kind of slow drift look like for you personally?
3. What would it practically look like for you to get quiet enough to hear what God has already been saying to you?

Section 2: Let Go Before You Can Move Forward

Hebrews 12:1-2 calls us to throw off everything that hinders, not just outright sin, but anything that keeps us from running the race marked out for us. The sermon made the point that some things in life are not sinful, they are just heavy, and that something can be perfectly acceptable and still be completely useless in the race God has called you to run.

4. What are you carrying right now that God never actually asked you to carry? Is it an old disappointment, a label someone put on you, a habit, a relationship, or an expectation you had for your life?
5. The sermon drew a distinction between things that aid your mission and things that only add weight. How do you discern the difference between the two in your own life?

6. Isaiah 43:18-19 describes God doing a new thing while we are still looking at the past. Where in your life are you most tempted to keep your eyes fixed on what is behind you rather than what God is doing ahead of you?
7. The sermon made this statement: "Your past can explain you, but it does not have to define you." How does that land with you? Is there a part of your past that you have allowed to have the final word in your life?

Section 3: God's Purpose Is Always Worth Our Next Step

The sermon walked through Joshua 1:9 and pointed out that God was not giving Joshua a motivational speech. He was giving him a mission. Courage is required precisely because you are about to do something you have never done before.

8. Have you ever stood at the edge of something you knew God was calling you to do, but everything inside of you wanted to stay where you were? What happened?
9. The sermon noted that if God gave us the entire plan, we would not need faith, we would just need information. How does that reframe the way you think about the uncertainty in your current situation?
10. James 1:22 warns that information without obedience produces self-deception. In what area of your life do you have more knowledge than obedience right now?
11. The sermon said that every miracle in scripture started with movement. Looking at examples like Abraham, Noah, Peter, and the servants at Cana, what does that pattern mean for whatever you are facing today?

Section 4: The Best Time to Obey God Is Now

2 Corinthians 6:2 declares that now is the time of God's favor and today is the day of salvation. The sermon closed with the challenge that later is one of the enemy's most effective tools, and that the road called later leads to a town called nowhere.

12. What is the "later" you have been telling yourself when it comes to something God has been asking you to do?
13. The sermon closed with a simple question: "What is my next step?" Take a moment of silence right now and ask that question honestly. What comes to mind? Share with the group if you are comfortable doing so.

Practical Applications

These are not meant to be overwhelming. Choose one that resonates most with where you are right now.

- Guard your attention this week. Identify one specific distraction that has been competing with your ability to hear from God and make one practical change to reduce its hold on your time and focus.
- Name what you are carrying. Write down one thing you have been holding onto that God has not asked you to carry. Bring it to him in prayer and ask for the grace to release it.
- Take your next step. Whatever came to mind during the closing reflection, write it down. Share it with someone in this group who can check in with you about it. Accountability matters.
- Have a gospel conversation. The sermon highlighted students who were having gospel conversations regularly. This week, look for one natural opportunity to tell someone what Jesus has done in your life or to invite someone into your community.
- Pray over your family. If you are a parent or a spouse, commit to one specific moment this week where you pray out loud over the people in your home. It does not have to be long or polished. It just has to happen.
- Take a step toward community. If you are not in a small group consistently, make the decision to commit. If you are already here, consider who in your life needs an invitation into this kind of community.

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by giving each person an opportunity to share one specific thing they are asking God for this week. Then pray together as a group, asking God to give each person the courage to take the next

step he has already shown them, and the faith to trust him with the steps he has not yet revealed.