




Pastor Jeff 9-18-16

Message Based Questions to help your personal Study & LifeGroup Discussions

 **CONNECTING:** *Connecting to one another with a warm up question or through worship.*

Thinking as yourself as a branch on Christ's vine, how would you describe the fruit in your life this past week or month? (Juicy, Green, Wormy, _____, etc..) Why?

 **EXPLORING IT:** *Review the sermon outline and explore the message by using the following Q's which will help you dig in a little deeper and make sure you get the message.*

*The mission of the church is to transform the world through the life-changing message of Jesus for the glory of God.
By loving God, loving God's people and then loving the world.*

To Listen to Message (CTRL + Click the Link)

<http://www.northlakeonline.org/messages/index.html>

What do you like or dislike about being alone?

Who is the vine? Who are the branches? (John 15)

What must we do in order to bear fruit? (John 15) Why do you think we need to personally spend time in quiet and solitude?

Of the two (Mary & Martha) which one can you identify with? Why? (Luke 10:10:38-42)

Why do you think Jesus spent so much time alone and in prayer if He was the Son of God?

Do you think having accountability with other believers is helpful when striving to become disciplined? Why or why not?

When is it most difficult for you to find "vine-time"? Why do you think that is?

What whirlwinds are keeping you from being a student of Christ and having the "Soul Care Shelter Time"?

Of the 4 reasons given for why we avoid God—Which one are you currently struggling with? Why?

What steps can you take to develop a more personal and disciplined relationship with Christ?

What are you going to start doing differently as a result of this message/meeting?

What area of serving will you be striving to be a part of?

How can we pray for you?



PRAY IT: *Now that you have connected, explored and applied it—it is now time to tap into the power of prayer individually throughout the week as well as corporately praying for one another. Perhaps by sharing the real life challenges and blessings with one another this will help people see what God can do in their lives and will lead them into a plan of action.*

More Food for thought

Sometimes, the demands of everyday life can keep us from tending to the inner life. It's what they call the "WHIRLWIND" and it's the massive list of all the to-do's and responsibilities that are a part of our day-to-day lives. This whirlwind will rob us from our focus as well as the things we value most in our lives.

It seems that we severely under-value the importance of tending to our soul care time. But truth, be told: our soul's health drives everything that matters to us. It is foundational to who we are. In the end, everything about our lives—who we are, what we do, who we influence, what we worship, is in some way a function of your soul.

Our souls are living. Our souls need attention and care. Here are some Psalms that encourage us to take care of our souls. Hope you enjoy.

- *Psalm 42:2 reminds us that the soul needs to be refreshed by the presence of God: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?"*
- *Psalm 63:5-8 tells us the soul can also be hungry: "My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips when I think of you on my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me." I think we often mistake the emptiness we have in our soul for an emptiness in our stomach. When I'm anxious, or upset, or frustrated, I unconsciously start looking for something to eat. It's not a physical hunger but a spiritual hunger that I try to stuff with pizza. When Jesus said, "I am the bread of life come down from heaven," he was teaching his followers that they could satisfy their hungry souls with him.*
- *Psalm 23:2-3 teaches that the soul needs rest: "He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake." How do you rest your soul? What are green pastures and still waters for you? I have started taking a Sabbath on Sundays. After church, I go somewhere quiet and peaceful and sit with God. I may read something for my spiritual growth, or I may journal or just pray. I may go for a run through the canyons or listen to some worship music. Whatever I do, it always has the purpose of turning my attention and focus toward God. Understanding God's love is the most restful, restoring thing you can do for your soul.*
- *Sometimes the soul is fearful. Psalm 57:1-3 says, "Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, until the destroying storms pass by. I cry to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me. He will send from heaven and save me, he will put to shame those who trample on me. God will send forth his steadfast love and his faithfulness."*
- *Pay attention to times your soul is overwhelmed with worries. Psalm 94:17-19 reminds us, "If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have died. When I thought, 'My foot is slipping,' your steadfast love, O Lord,*

held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, your tender words cheer my soul.” God’s Word is more than just a tool to be used for outward ministry. It is full of encouragement, reassurance and tender words that your soul longs to hear. Meditating on God’s promises is a powerful way to break the tyranny of worries.

- *Finally, listen for signals that your soul is distressed or suffering. Psalm 31:9-10 says, “Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye wastes away from grief, my soul and body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my misery, and my bones waste away.”*

Keep Pressing On!

Rob Richards

Rob.Richards72@Gmail.com