

MC 2012

Saturday Night Fellowship Meeting



Journal



Instructions:

Step 1: Find a quiet place somewhere on the property. Flip through the pages of this journal and identify the 2 or 3 topics that you believe most closely align with your biggest struggles, or your greatest opportunity for personal growth. Spend 10 minutes per topic answering the questions on that particular page. Do not rush. Make an effort to fully expand on your answers as best as possible.

Step 2: We will reconvene in small groups as described below. Please return to the main area at the selected time and meet up with your group leader. Each small group will meet and discuss notes from the individual journals.

Group 1: Ron (leader), Jay, Bob, Sid

Group 2: Brian (leader), Bobby, Kent, Tom

Group 3: Todd (leader), Huff, Robbie, Blair, Commish

Group 4: Lloyd (leader), Sam, Clark, Robillard, LeBoeuf

Group 5: Kight (leader), Key, Hurst, Nichols

Group 6: Gary (leader), Gonzo, Brittain, Bo

Step 3: We will reconvene as a large group. The hope is that several folks will want to share from their journal and express the individual goals and improvements they have defined.



Spiritual Growth

Paul, writing to the Colossians about Christ:

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things,, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” --Colossians 1:15-20

Paul is pouring out his heart about Christ, and who Christ is to him, and to God. We get a clear picture of how focused Paul’s life is and how centered he is on Christ.

1. Read the scripture above at least 2-3 times. How does this make you feel about Christ, who he is, and how God views him?

2. When we want to learn about something, we often read books and study the topic. How often do you read and study the Bible?

3. If your answer to #2 is lower than you prefer, ask yourself a tough question....do you really want to learn about him? And if you do, what will you do about it?
 - Write your plan for how you will start reading the Bible:

 - Write your plan for how you will start praying more:

 - Write your plan for how you will start listening to God more:



Other “gods”

Do you have hobbies, activities, or things in life that you give more time, attention, and money than you give to God? Hobbies and activities are certainly not wrong. Not at all. Until our focus and reliance on them comes before our focus and reliance on God. Read the list below of some of the most common “other gods”:

Work	Play (golf, hunting, fishing, etc..)	Materialism
Time	Attention/Fame	Alcohol
“Busy”-ness	Time away from family	College football

1. If you ran a report from your bank account over the past 90 days, which of the items above got more of your **money** than God got? Be honest with yourself and circle the ones that apply.
2. If you reviewed your personal calendar over the past 90 days, which of the items above get more of your **time** than God gets? Be honest with yourself and circle the ones that apply?
3. Regarding your answers to questions #1 and #2 above, which question challenges you the most? Are you willing to work on that one?
4. We all quickly think of justifications....”well, there’s nothing wrong with going to the football game this weekend”or.....”there’s nothing wrong with playing golf with the guys on the weekend”...or.....”I enjoy having nice things and that’s my decision”.....

Lamentations 3:40 says “Let us examine our ways and return to the Lord.”

- What are you willing to examine?
- Write out your plan for this examination? When? How?



Loving Others

We all have a group of people that we are closest to.....the ones we love the most in life. We often express our love for them in our own way, rather than in the way they prefer. For example, men often prefer to buy gifts for their spouse rather than taking a walk or going on a date. In the chart below, make a list of the people you love most. Then, make notes about you express love to them. Be specific. Then, be honest, and write down how they like to be loved (what would they write if they answered this question themselves).

	Person	How You Love Them	How They Want to be Loved
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

1. Who have you been loving in your language? What will you do to love them in their language? Are you willing to improve?

2. Make specific notes here about your plan for doing so.



Being a Husband

We know what the Lord says about the role of a husband. One of the most commonly read Bible verses is Ephesians 5:25-28: “Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that he may sanctify her having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish”²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Think of several keywords in this scripture:

- “gave himself up for her”
- “Sanctify her” (to set her apart from other things)
- “washing of the water with the word”
- “holy and without blemish”
- “love their wives as their own bodies”

1 From this list of keywords, which ones can you improve upon? Be specific.

2. Identify the last time you:

- Sincerely told your wife you love her _____
- Spent time with her on her agenda not yours _____

3. How would your wife grade your tone of voice to her _____

4. Do you sanctify her? Do you really treat her as the most special and most sacred thing to you as Christ did the church?

5. What would your wife say is the single most important thing you could do to improve the marriage? Are you willing to do it?



Being a Father

“Fathers, do not provoke your children, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

--Ephesians 6:4

Many of us are great parents, and we love our kids more than anything. We spend time teaching them, disciplining them, and loving them. Today's culture teaches us to make decisions based on feelings and emotions, or on opinions. The scripture reference above reminds us to keep the Lord as the centerpiece of our decisions for how we raise our kids.

Think about certain issues in today's culture.....marriage, divorce, sex, choice of movies, how we spend our time/money, or even the amount of time we spend on our jobs. These are things that people often make decisions on based on the path of least resistance. We do the thing that is most gratifying to us at the time. What if we trained ourselves to say, “let's see what the Bible says about this”? How different would our answers be? How differently would we raise our kids?

1. How often do you pray **for** your kids? How often do you pray **with** your kids?
2. How often do your kids see you studying the Bible?
3. How would your kids answer this question.....”Dad is available to spend time with me when.....”? Would they say a) anytime and anywhere, b) most of the time, c) as long as he doesn't have to work or do something else, or d) my dad's not around much.
4. One of the best ways we can honor God is by honoring his definition of sexual purity (God designed sex to be between a male and a female after marriage). Are you willing to treat this subject seriously with your kids? Have you already? Are you willing to coach your kids towards the goal of sexual purity until marriage?
5. What other areas of life in your family do you have an opportunity to set Christ as the example and use him as the basis for making decisions?