

life groups

NLC Weekly Sermon Study

Week of February 19, 2017
Sermon: No Need to be Overwhelmed



Schedule

30 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **52-CARD SHUFFLE**. Each person receives a card from a normal deck; include the jokers as wild cards. Have all group members stand in an open area, holding their cards. Instruct the group to move into a variety of configurations and introduce themselves to the new person or group of people. Give the group a short topic to discuss, such as favorite food, book, movie, etc. Ideas for configurations: Cards with the Same Number, Suits, Straight, Full House. (Note: When some people are left without a match, help them make a group of their own or join an existing group.)

OPENING PRAYER

REVIEW OF KEY POINTS OF LAST WEEK'S SERMON, "OVERWHELMED."

- The way we think is the root of our insecurities, not the circumstances we find ourselves in.
- It's not your feelings that shape your life, but what you believe to be true (regardless of whether or not it is true).
- Your thoughts control your life. Every action begins with a thought, but our thoughts can be reset by the Spirit of God.
- All temptation happens in your mind, the battleground for sin.
- Managing your thought life is the key to peace. Only you can control your thoughts. Satan can't, and God won't.
- How to renew your thoughts: Feed your mind truth by meditating on the Word every day. Take your thoughts captive. Find the will of God by being in the will of God.

45-60 MIN No Need to be Overwhelmed

- The biggest mistake we make when we're overwhelmed is focusing on the problem, instead of on God.

HAVE SOMEONE READ MATT 11-28-30 "Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'"

HAVE SOMEONE ELSE READ 2 CHRON 20:15 "The Lord says you must not be discouraged or be afraid to face this vast army. The battle depends on God, not you."

- We feel overwhelmed when we don't seek God's help. Your best fight is just not enough sometimes. This happens around our job, money, a messy house, school, sickness, mistakes, regret, fear, kids,

or even guilt.

- “Overwhelmed” means to be buried underneath, to feel stuck or drowning.

TURN TO 1 KINGS 19:1-5 AND HAVE A FEW PEOPLE TAKE TURNS READING THIS PASSAGE.

- When Jezebel promised to kill him, Elijah, overwhelmed, fled in fear.

FOUR SIGNS OF BEING OVERWHELMED

- **You are afraid.**
 - › Elijah was first calling down fire from heaven, and the next chapter he was in total despair.
- **You run away.**
 - › Just because you’re present on the outside, that doesn’t mean you haven’t run away internally.
- **You are alone.**
 - › The last person around Elijah was his servant.
- **You want to quit or maybe even die.**
 - › How did Elijah get it back? God told him to go on top of the mountain and stand in his presence again. Just look up!

Q1. Have you felt any of these things lately? Have you felt overwhelmed lately by any problem or circumstance?

TWO SIGNS OF OVERWHELMING DEFEAT

- **HOPELESSNESS.**
 - › You can go 40 days without food, a few days without water, and a few minutes without air, but you can’t go a second without hope.
 - › When you start to feel hopeless about anything, you get discouraged and want to give up. You begin to lose heart.
 - › Hopelessness is a self-destructive weapon that robs you of God’s plan for your life.

1 THESS. 4:13 “You do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.”

- › Hope comes from the Lord, causes you to move forward again, makes you dream, think creatively, and gives you solutions.

Q2. Have you ever felt hopeless about a relationship, finances, or your health? Explain.

HAVE SOMEONE READ ROMANS 15:13 “I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace

because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.”

- Every time God shows up, He brings hope with Him.
- **BITTERNESS.**
 - › Bitterness is like cancer to the soul—a poison that eats you from the inside—a self-destructive emotion that makes you miserable.
 - › Bitterness is afraid that if you don’t guard yourself, you’ll get hurt all over again.
 - › Bitterness finds fault all around—at home or work, with friends or at church.

Q3. Are you slow to celebrate others’ wins, whether at home, work, or church?

- The root of bitterness is mentioned in numerous places in the Word:
HEBREWS 12:14-16 “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;”
- The root of bitterness affects your emotions, your finances, your health, the course of your life, even your prayer life.
- “Many become defiled” means it affects everyone around you. When you are bitter, you become relationally toxic.
- **Bitterness Deceives**
- Satan tempted Eve with some deception. Deception always has a little truth, then a twist.
 - › First, “God knows if you eat of this fruit, you’ll be like Him,” but they were already like Him—made in His image!
 - › Then, “You’ll know good,” but they already walked with God in the cool of the day!
 - › Then, “God is withholding something from you. There is more to life that you should experience, and He is bad for not opening that world to you.
 - › This lie has been Satan’s greatest bait: “There is something out there that is better for you than what you have.”
 - › Satan is trying to get her to be bitter towards God, because Satan was bitter towards God, why he got kicked out of heaven.
- **Bitterness Defiles**
 - › The word “defiles” means to stain, to dye with another color.
 - › Bitterness paints you into something you were not created to be. It literally distorts the image of God you were created in.
 - › It will change the course of your life.
 - › In the Book of Ruth, Naomi had lost so much, she said, “Don’t

call me 'Naomi,' (which means pleasant); call me 'Mariah,' (which means bitter), because God has dealt bitterly with me."

- When Jesus was on the cross, they offered him sour wine and gall. Psalms called it a bitter drink. What did Jesus do? He tasted it but didn't drink it.
 - › Jesus's last temptation was bitterness, but He forgave instead: "Father forgive them. They know not what they do."
 - › Everyone will taste bitterness, but you don't have to drink it.
- How do you not drink in bitterness? By being quick to forgive others who are trying hurt you.
 - › Forgiveness means releasing others: ex-spouse, past situations, friends, and yourself!
 - › It's common for us to beat ourselves up over past mistakes. When you do this, you are believing the lie that Jesus' work on the Cross wasn't enough to cover your mistakes.
 - › Sometimes we don't forgive out of fear that we'll get hurt again, but keeping someone "under your thumb" only hurts you, not the other person.

Q4. Can you think of a time when you were bitter over a situation—maybe wondering why God allowed it to happen or at least didn't stop it? What helped you overcome that memory, or does it still have a little sting to it?

- Sometimes we even need to release God, to not hold Him responsible for things that happen. When you release, you will see God pull that root right out of your life.
 - › Instead, choose to thank Him in every situation.

PHIL 4:6-7 "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

TAKE PRAYER REQUESTS, AND TAKE TIME TO PRAY OVER ANY NEEDS THAT HAVE COME UP DURING DISCUSSION

ANNOUNCEMENTS