

THE ROAD AHEAD: PRIORITIZING THE ETERNAL OVER THE EARTHLY

MATTHEW 6:19-34

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – NOVEMBER 24, 2024

INTRODUCTION

This discussion guide is designed to help you explore deeper into the themes presented in the sermon “The Road Ahead: Prioritizing the Eternal Over the Earthly.” The sermon addresses the universal struggle with worry and emphasizes the importance of focusing on eternal purposes rather than temporary distractions. As we explore these topics together, let’s open our hearts and minds to what God wants to teach us about trust, priority, and faith in our daily lives.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

What’s one funny or trivial thing you’ve found yourself worrying about recently? How did you realize it wasn’t worth the stress?

SERMON RECAP

There is a way to do good things (i.e., acts of righteousness, such as giving to the needy, praying, and fasting) that is actually bad for us ... and not glorifying to God.

- We are constantly tempted to do good things in order to be seen (and rewarded) by others.
- We are constantly tempted to do good things in order to be seen (and rewarded) by ourselves.

Yet, Jesus is calling us to a better way to live.

- True life is found in doing good things in the gladness of being seen (and rewarded) by God alone.
- The most important part of your life is the part that no one else but God sees.
- True life is found in doing good things in the gladness of bringing glory to God alone.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Understanding Universal Worry
 - Read Matthew 6:25-27.
 - Question: The sermon mentions that worry is an unwelcome companion that follows us through every chapter of our lives. Why do you think worry is such a common experience for people of all ages and backgrounds?
2. Prioritizing the Eternal Over the Earthly
 - Read Matthew 6:19-21.
 - Question: What does “laying up treasures in heaven” mean to you? How can we practically invest in eternal treasures rather than earthly ones?
3. Assessing Our Baggage
 - Illustration Reference: The sermon compares carrying unnecessary baggage in a car to holding onto materialism and worldly attachments.
 - Question: What “unnecessary baggage” might you be carrying that’s hindering your spiritual progress? How can you begin to shed these weights?
4. The Connection Between Treasure and Heart
 - Question: The sermon states that where our treasure is, there our heart will be also. How do our investments of time, money, and energy reveal what’s truly important to us?
5. Perception Determines Direction
 - Read Matthew 6:22-24.
 - Question: How do distractions and divided loyalties act like smudges on our spiritual windshield? What are some practical ways to “clear your windshield” and improve your spiritual vision?

6. Serving Two Masters
 - Question: The sermon mentions that we can't serve both God and worldly desires, just like we can't be on a diet and accidentally eat a whole pizza. In what areas might you be trying to serve two masters, and how is that affecting your relationship with God?
7. Placing Trust Over Troubled Thoughts
 - Read Matthew 6:25-34.
 - Question: Jesus gives several reasons why we shouldn't worry. Which of these reasons resonates most with you, and why?
8. Shifting from Worry to Trust
 - Quote Reference: Corrie ten Boom said, "Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength."
 - Question: How can we practically shift from worry to trust in our daily lives? What steps can you take to trust God more fully with your concerns?
9. Seeking First the Kingdom of God
 - Question: What does it mean to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"? How can prioritizing God's kingdom alleviate our anxieties about daily needs?
10. Applying the Driving Analogy
 - Question: The sermon uses driving as an analogy for life, emphasizing the importance of looking through the windshield rather than fixating on the rearview mirror.
 - Question: How can you apply this analogy to your own life? What steps can you take to focus more on God's path ahead rather than past regrets or future anxieties?

ACTION STEPS DISCUSSION

- Review the Map: How can regularly reading Scripture and seeking God's guidance help you stay on the right spiritual path?
- Clean the Windshield: What distractions or negative influences do you need to eliminate to see God's direction more clearly?
- Trust the Journey: In what areas do you need to surrender control to God, trusting Him even when the way forward seems unclear?

CLOSING REFLECTION

Question: After today's discussion, what's one specific change you feel led to make to prioritize the eternal over the earthly in your life?

PRAYER

Close your time together by inviting group members to share any prayer requests. Then, pray collectively, asking God to help each person trust Him more deeply, eliminate unnecessary worries, and focus on His eternal purposes.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR

Encourage openness and honesty during the discussion, creating a safe space for everyone to share their thoughts and experiences. Remind participants that the goal is to support one another in applying biblical truths to everyday life.