

Small Group Leader Notes, September 10, 2006

As we come to the close of the study on the Songs of Ascent, we see that worship is the focus. Spend time this week worshipping God together. Consider practicing worship in this way, ask those who are able, to kneel (while other may just sit) and worship God with your words in prayers of praise to His holy name. Select a song of praise to sing or listen to in worship through music together blessing His name. Bless God by blessing one another with encouraging words of affirmation in Christ as you continue to pray. Call on God to reveal to each of you, how you are to stand and serve Him. Finally, stand together, and in prayer, ask God to be your strength, your focus, and your desire, as you serve Him in love.

In Tim's message he said, "I believe we have a summation of the Christian life in Psalm 134: we are to kneel and bless the Lord and stand to serve the Lord."

1. How does kneeling and blessing, followed by standing and serving bring blessing and praise to the Lord?

When I start by focusing on Him, who He is, and what He has done, I put my mind in the proper perspective of worship and that then fills me up so I can begin to serve as an overflow of His love for me. Standing and serving brings blessings to God when I recognize why I want to stand for Him and serve for Him. That is worship!

2. Have you ever been led to praise God in the night? What was the cause of such a stirring?
Give people time to answer on their own according to how God has worked in their lives. It may take some prompting for people to remember a time and encouragement to speak about it.

I have been led to praise God at night usually when something big is happening or about to happen. I get to a point of restlessness recognizing that only if it is for Him, and through Him, and to Him that it will bring glory to His name. I must acknowledge it is all about Jesus. At that point, God takes over and restlessness turns to praise and fear turns to standing and serving in His power. I went through this personally when I was called into eldership and as a pastor on staff at EVC. What could have resulted in worry and fear, or selfishness and pride turned into a time of praise and submission to His will.

3. How can you kneel and bless God, then stand and serve Him in the dark places that surround you?

Talk about the areas God has placed them into and how He is calling them to first, kneel and bless Him, and then stand and serve. The workplace can be a dark place in our lives and we are called to be lights that bring Him praise. Praying over our workplace, asking God to give us direction and open doors to our message then, standing with integrity and serving at work as you are serving for the Lord is one way to bless God.

Read the following verses:

Colossians 3:23-24: Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Colossians 4:2-6: Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

This is the scripture prayer we (our workplace, Bible Study/Prayer, group) claimed at OSH while I was employed and the Lord answered this humble prayer in mighty ways to bless His holy name. Go to God on your knees in the dark place and bless His holy name, the stand and serve Him, always claiming this scripture in prayer for your workplace, for your neighborhood, for you family, for any group of people you associate with (sports teams, school groups, hobbies...) and acting on where God leads you.

4. How has God blessed you in worshiping and serving the Lord?

Let everyone share how God has blessed him or her as a result of worship and service.

5. What might God be saying to you through this message?

Encourage people to kneel and bless God and then to stand and serve. We are called to be doers of the word. Some people tend to want to be served without ever taking the role of serving. James 1:22 says, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

In love, challenge those who are not serving, to get involved as an act of worship to bless God. We have already shared many places to stand up for God but another is in our own church body.

- We need children's ministry workers to come alongside those who are already laboring for the Lord. If people want to serve in our children's ministry have them contact Pam Wood at 605-6988 for grades K-5 or Sherry Hadley at 226-2806 for Nursery and Preschool.
- With a third service beginning October 1st on Sunday evenings, we need people to step up to serve as ushers, sound and PowerPoint technicians, and nursery help.
- We need people to host and lead small groups. Many members are seeking to join a group, but we need more groups. Hosting and/or leading a group during the month of October are another way to bless God.

This Week's Meditation: Read Acts 16:16-40 about Paul and Silas and how they worshipped and served God in a very dark hour. Learn how the Lord blessed them.

REMINDERS:

- Reminder: 9/23 Leadership Day Retreat. Please begin to inform me through email if you can or cannot attend. It will be a Spirit filled awesome day at a Manresa beach house and it is free to you as leaders. I think we can have coffee, juice, and morning refreshments by 10:00AM and begin promptly at 10:30AM. Break for lunch and some built-in time on the beach in the middle of the day. We will conclude about 5:00PM and those that want to hang out can join us for some praise and fellowship on the beach (around the fire if it is cold). We will have lunch brought over for the day so I will need a head count so please let me know if you and your spouse are coming or not.
- EVC is sponsoring a table at the Heritage Home Banquet and we have purchased 10 seats for people wishing to attend. The dinner is being held on the evening of September 22nd. If you or people in your group desire to attend please contact me. Tickets are already paid for and will be assigned on a first come first serve basis.