

Storyteller

LIVING WITH NO REGRETS

Matt VanCleave
October 18, 2020

GROUP ICE BREAKER

If you could have one “do over” in life, what would it be?

BECOMING A STORYTELLER

Give time for someone in the group to share their story using the Becoming A Storyteller Guide.

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will consider where I am not fully obedient to God.
- I will read God's Word so that I know God's will.
- I will say yes to God about something He's calling me to change.
- I will enter into a practice that will help me change.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

Telling stories was Jesus' primary method of teaching, and one of the primary reasons for this is because people are defensive. People resist truth, but often a story has a way of getting past eyes that don't see and around ears that don't hear. A life cannot be borrowed. You are constructing your one and only life. A lot of us go through life trying to avoid the responsibility that we have, but Jesus is saying that you and I are responsible to prepare. There are a few areas where we can end up with regret if we don't, where we're left saying, “if only” or “it's too late”? The first area is parenting. If you're a parent, will you say, “As best I can, I will do no-regret parenting?” You don't want to get to the end of your life and look back at major parental regrets. Another area is sin. Are there any patterns of sin in your life right now that you haven't dealt with? I plead with you, don't walk away from it. The last area is our relationships. Maybe you need to dive deeper in your relationships, tell someone you love them, forgive someone, say I'm sorry. Life is precious and time is short. Don't reach the end of your one and only life and be tormented by the words, “If only.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Matthew 24:42-44. How does this passage compare with Jesus' story of the bridesmaids in Matthew 25:1-13? Why would Jesus tell stories with similar messages?
2. Why do people resist hearing or seeing truth? Why do you think Jesus used stories in response to this resistance?

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONT)

3. Describe a life that from an eternal perspective was lived wisely and to the fullest. What are ways of living that can distract from that? What are ways to guard yourself from those distracting ways of living?
4. Jesus is saying through this story that we are responsible to prepare. Prepare for what? How can we prepare?
5. If you're a parent, what's one area that you can pledge before God to parent in a no-regret manner? What can you do this week to begin that pledge?
6. Read 1 John 1:5-10. What pattern of sin is in your life that you haven't dealt with? What can you do this week to deal with that pattern?
7. Think of a relationship in your life that will end in regret if changes aren't made? What can you do this week to begin to change that relationship?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will read "Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets" by Andy Stanley.
- I will make parenting a priority, and not abdicate my responsibility.
- I will do battle with the sin in my life.
- I will call someone and say, "I love you."
- I will take a risk and open up in a relationship.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Matthew 13:10-13
- Matthew 25:1-13
- 1 Samuel 3:13
- James 5:16

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BECOMING A STORYTELLER

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“Stories are the creative conversation of life into a more powerful, clearer, more meaningful experience. They are the currency of human contact.” Robert McKee

Stories move us. They inspire us. Stories are a way to touch the heart and inspire greater understanding about life. Life with God. Life with each other. There’s power in our story. Stories create connection, and that’s why we want everyone to have an opportunity to tell their story.

Being in community with others is really getting to know them, which usually entails knowing their story and them knowing yours. The idea of telling your personal story to others may make you a little uncomfortable, but it doesn’t have to be a big production nor comprehensive. It’s simply to give the others in your group a sense of what makes you uniquely you and what God has done in your spiritual journey.

WHAT PARTS OF YOUR STORY TO TELL

When you think of your story, it’s probably centered around people, places and events. Those three categories capture how we interact with the world around us.

One way to organize your thoughts is to use the space provided on the reverse side to identify people who have played significant roles in your life, places that are special to you, and events that have affected you. It’s really as simple as that.

You probably can’t talk about all the people, places and events you write down as your story should only be five to ten minutes max, but this will give you a place to start. From here, you can think through the parts of your story that are the most important to emphasize. It’s your story and you are free to share what you want to share.

Above all, remember this. You may think the other members of your group aren’t interested in your story, but that’s not true. Most of us are curious about the people around us, and we’re predisposed to empathize and connect with others. Your story will help draw the other members of your group closer. You’ll also be amazed at how many people will relate to parts of your story.

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KEY PEOPLE

KEY PLACES

KEY EVENTS

(Events can be turning points, something that took you from one chapter to the next, or plot twists, something that moved your story in a completely unexpected direction.)

You can keep this paper with you when sharing your story. The point isn't to be a perfect public speaker. The point is for your group to get to know each other and create or deepen authentic community. Our stories give background and context to our conversations each week and will enhance our time together. So as difficult as sharing your story may be, it's worth it! It'll give us a deeper understanding of each other as we all journey through this part of our stories together. And that's a good thing.