

Chapter Five: *God's Biggest Priority*

Getting Connected

Describe a time when you said “yes” to God, even though you didn’t feel like doing so. What happened because you did this?

What do you think would have happened if you’d said “no”?

Highlights and Insights

In your own words, how would you *briefly* summarize Chapter 5?

Was there anything that really caught your attention, challenged or confused you in this chapter? What emotions were conjured up as you read?

Ask someone in the group to read aloud the story of Mark in the first two paragraphs of this chapter (beginning on page 89). Resist the temptation to follow along in the book; just listen.

If you would’ve met Mark before reading this chapter, how would you have responded to him?

How about now, after reading this chapter?

Biblical Focus

How do we typically measure “closeness to God”?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. How did Paul measure it?

Take Paul’s words in verse 9 and make them your own. What does it sound like?

Identify a weakness in your life.

What would it look like to actually boast in this weakness, seeing it as an opportunity for you to more deeply experience Christ? Try and be as concrete as possible here.

Group assignment: Read Romans 1:17, three times silently to yourself.

What are some critical things this verse teaches about faith?

Why do you think this verse had such a profound impact upon Martin Luther (1483-1546), the church reformer whose ideas influenced the Protestant Reformation and in many ways changed the course of Western civilization?

The Heart of the Matter

On pages 99-101, the author describes two spiritual pathways: the “Pleasing God” path and the “Trusting God” path.

Which pathway do you *most often* choose? Why?

Spend a little time pondering how choosing this path has affected your relationship with God.

What is one way your relationship with God would be different if your obedience was rooted in simple trust in Jesus rather than out of fear of disappointing God?

In Conclusion...

In what way, old or new, is God asking you to trust him?

What is one way your group can be praying for you as you begin to step out in trust? Remember, sometimes we have not because we ask not.

The title of this chapter is “God’s Biggest Priority”. On page 94 the author writes, “Faith is the one thing God is most interested in from you. Your faith is more important to Him than your worship, obedience, prayer, evangelism, you name it.”

Do you agree with this statement ... that faith is God’s biggest priority?

Explain your answer.

Note to Participants: In the next four chapters, you will be encouraged at times to experience some specific faith-fueling exercises. We encourage you to come to the group having attempted the exercise so that the discussion can build upon those experiences.