

Delayed Praise

Conversation Starters

Looking for a way to get the group talking? Try one of these conversation starters.

- Summer is just around the corner, which means LOVE Week will be here before we know it! Go around and share previous LOVE Week events you've attended and what you enjoyed about it. (You can learn more about LOVE Week [here](#).)
- Pastor Steven took Holly and Abbey to see Taylor Swift. Share about a favorite concert or sporting event that you've attended!

Sermon Reflection

Help transition the group to the discussion with one of these questions.

- What stood out to you from this week's message?
- What from the message encouraged you/challenged you the most?

Sermon Discussion

Select 1-2 themes from the sermon to discuss with your eGroup.

- Read Psalm 34:1. In this Psalm, David teaches us the art of "delayed praise" — of praising God in the space between where we are right now in our pain, and where we believe God has called us to be. However, it's easy for us to fill that in-between space with discouragement (it's never going to happen) or delay (it seems crazy to still

believe it will ever happen).

- Share about a difficult experience or season in your past that you now look back on and see a greater purpose for it.
 - What helps you to praise God even in the midst of hardship and uncertainty?
 - When you're in an in-between space — between what God promised and what you're currently experiencing — which lie do you tend to believe: the lie of discernment or the lie of delay? How can you practically combat that lie this week?
- Read Psalm 34:2 and 1 Samuel 27:1. David's soul and mind were saying two different things, his soul was praising God while his mind was saying that he was going to die. Pastor Steven taught us that praising God is a decision we make; will we believe the lies that our minds tell us or will we decide to praise God based on what we know is true in our souls?
 - When you're tempted to believe the racing thoughts in your mind, what can help you to make a decision to praise God in spite of those thoughts?
 - What would change about your week if you put a pause between the thoughts you think and the words you let out of your mouth? (examples: thoughts of fears, negative thoughts towards others, thoughts of doubts).
 - Go around and share some examples of things you know to be true about God (He loves me, He provides for me, He has a plan for me, etc). How can you keep these truths continually in your mouth this week?
 - Read Psalm 34:3. What we magnify in our life, we get more of. One of the enemy's tactics is to keep us so busy and distracted that we never take the time to magnify God or reflect on what He's doing in our life. As we reflect on our difficult seasons we realize that, in time, certain aspects of that season have turned into blessings.
 - What are you currently magnifying, and how can you begin to magnify God and his blessings more?
 - Fill in this sentence "I'm magnifying ____ right now, but I'm going to work on magnifying ____ instead."
 - What are some of the ways the enemy tries to distract you and keep you busy? How can you fight against that this week and instead take some time to reflect on God?
 - What aspects of previous difficult seasons have turned into blessings for you over time?
 - The enemy frequently tells us the lie that we're never going to make it through this. Sometimes we get so caught up in focusing on our "this" that we forget about T.H.A.T. (Things He Already Taught). Pastor Steven taught us how today's "this" is just a "that" in the making.

- Share about a “this” that you’re currently facing, or faced recently.
- What are some THATs that you’ve learned from previous seasons (lessons that God has already taught you that you want to remember)?
- How can you keep THAT at the center of your focus this week? (make a list and hang it somewhere where you’ll see it, set a daily reminder to reflect on God’s blessings, etc).

Activating Faith

Challenge your group to keep activating their faith. Make this a part of your eGroup time or send this activity to them after you meet.

Take some time to pause and reflect with God. Set a two minute timer to simply sit with God in silence and reflect on God’s character and His blessings to you. Next, on your phone or on a piece of paper, write down your “this” — the hardships that you’re currently dealing with. After that, write down a list of THATs over the top of your “this” — things that God has already taught you about Himself and who you are to Him (THAT = Things He Already Taught). Push back your “this” with a THAT. Read 1 John 5:14-15. When the enemy tries to remind you of the “this” you don’t think you can get through, push him back with a THAT — a praise to God until He lifts you up.

Prayer

Close out your group with prayer using one of these options

- An Interactive Prayer
 - Break into partners and share with one another some of the thoughts that have been racing through your minds. Remind one another of the truths of God and spend time praying for the other person. Pray that they will be reminded of God’s truth and for God to help them keep His praise on their lips this week.

- A Guided Prayer
 - Dear Father, thank you for all that you've brought me through. Please remind me of all the lessons I've learned about you, about your love, and about your plans for my life. Help me magnify you this week and reflect on all your blessings towards me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Additional Resources

Want to help your group go deeper after you meet? Send them one of these resources that relates to the sermon topic.

Keep listening to "Trust In God" for encouragement to keep praising God in the in-between seasons!

Watch the sermon "Focus Your Faith" to learn how the power of faith can transform our perspective.

Watch this short called "It's Okay to Feel Afraid" by Pastor Steven for encouragement on how to stop surrendering to our feelings.