

Keys for Useful Service

Insights on Romans 15:22-33

Pastor Dave Nichols, Grace Point Church, June 10, 2018

Paul's Model of Useful Service...

1. To fail to plan, _____

(Romans 15:22-24, 28)

2. We hold our plans _____

(Romans 15:32, Acts 21-28)

- Trust in the...

- God's plan is...

3. Be people who _____

(Romans 15:26-28, 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Galatians 2:10)

- Be...

4. Be faithful _____

(Romans 15:30-31, 1 John 5:14-16, Jeremiah 29:12)

- Pray for...

- Pray for...

This weeks discussion guide:

Welcome to "Week 9" of our small group session!

We are glad that you have taken this journey with us digging into God's Word with others. We pray this is a time of growth, encouragement, and fun as you deepen friendships and make new friends along the way! This session of small groups will wrap up the week of June 24th.

Looking Back:

Each week we'll look and have an opportunity to share with our group how the week went and also share a few things to help us get to know each other better. What is something encouraging that happened since our last meeting?

1. Sometimes life throws us curveballs. Tell of a time when you made plans, whether it was for a vacation or other things, where you planned, but then nothing went according to plan. How did you react?

2. The last points of this weekends message was to be a person of prayer. We are to pray for our desires and our needs. When was a time when you were encouraged because you saw the power of answered prayer? Was there a time where God answered your prayer differently but as you look back you see that God's plan was definitely better than anything you had planned?

Each week in "looking back," we also want to give each other the opportunity to look back since our last meeting and share how we applied something to our daily lives that we learned or discussed previously from God's Word.

Looking Up:

1. Paul had big plans to visit the church in Rome. He laid those plans out in Romans 15, but yet sometimes understanding God's will can be a confusing thing. There is good news though, there are many times where God explains his will in his word. As you read through the following verses, what are the clear parts of God's will that could help us when confused?

- **Proverbs 3:5-6, Ephesians 5:15-20,
1 Thessalonians 4:3, 5:18**

Can you think of any time where God's will was made evident to you?

2. It's important for us to stay obedient to what we know whether we know the outcome or not. A great biblical example of this is Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3:8-20. How did these three young Hebrew leaders demonstrate obedience to God despite not knowing what would happen?

How might you use a similar approach today when you aren't sure of God's will?

3. Paul was confident that after he traveled to Jerusalem to deliver the gifts to the church there, he was going to travel to Spain by way of Rome. We see in Acts 21-28 that he did travel to Rome, but it was more as a criminal than as a free man wanting to share the Gospel. Read the following passages about plans changing. What can we learn from these passages in our lives when our plans don't go our way?

- **Genesis 16, Genesis 40**

How should we respond when our plans don't go the way we want them to?

4. To fail to plan is to plan to fail, is a spiritual truth of all of us. What are some plans you would like to begin to continue to grow with Christ over the course of this summer?

Looking Forward:

This last section is based on passages like the one below.

*But don't just listen to God's Word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the Word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.
James 1:22-25 (NLT)*

Let's take a few minutes to silently pray and reflect back on this last week's message and what we discussed in our group. As we reflect, let's all pray and ask God for a specific application that He might prompt us to live out this week. If you are willing, share this with the group.

To help us as we reflect, here are some possible applications to get us thinking...

- Sit down this week by yourself or with your spouse and write down a "Spiritual Growth Plan" for your family this summer.
- Remember a time when your plans didn't work out, yet you saw God work for the better. Write these down to remember God's faithfulness to you.
- Write down prayer requests for yourself and others this week. Track to see how God works and answers these requests.

As we look forward to this week, let's pray for one another!