

Too Comfortable: Week 1

Sermon date 1/29/2017

QUICK REVIEW

- 1) Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

The Goal

Welcome back, Leaders! Here is a little reminder about the goal of the study. Every week there is a specific theme or idea we want to communicate from the passages we will be studying. The overriding theme of this series is the idea of being too comfortable "when my comfort conflicts with God's challenges." Many times we go through life walking past our own dirty couches, unaware of how they look to others, because we have become too comfortable with the stains and filth. God wants to challenge us to move beyond our comfort level and step into His love and direction. The theme we will be weaving in each week is the idea of finding vision clarity about each of the areas we will be discussing. We will unpack one idea each week in the Chair Time Tools to help discover God's vision for our lives.

Over the last two weeks Pastor Craig challenged us to gain a fresh God-sized vision for our lives. We will be unpacking those last two weeks about what vision is and where it needs to come from. The passage we will be using the next three weeks comes from Matthew 6. Remember to have some fun and get to know your group members.

MY STORY

- 2) What are you hoping to get from this series?
- 3) Was there anything from the last two weeks of this series that challenged your way of thinking?

DIGGING DEEPER

- 4) Over the last two weeks Pastor Craig has been speaking about the idea of "vision clarity for our own lives". What does he mean by this phrase, and why is it important?
- 5) Here at Bayside of Citrus Heights, the leadership uses something we call the *Game Plan* for vision clarity. In the *Game Plan*, we as a leadership team define a clear vision for us to

become the men and women God has called us to be. The statement below is foundational and worth unpacking.

- a) We are Biblically-Based. What does "Biblically-Based" mean in this context, and how does it apply to a personal vision for your life?

This value above is key and foundational for a clear vision. The basis for all vision in a Christian's life is the Word of God. If vision comes from any other place than the Bible, it can be a false vision and a lie. These questions are intended to draw people to that conclusion and help them ask if there is any other base they are trusting as their foundation.

- 6) What does the phrase "worldview" mean?

The Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics states that, "A *worldview* is how one views or interprets reality. The German word is *Weltanschauung*, meaning a "world and life view," or "a paradigm." It is the framework through which or by which one makes sense of the data of life. A worldview makes a world of difference in one's view of God, origins, evil, human nature, values, and destiny,².

- 7) What are some of the ways we develop a worldview?

Our parents, church, society, culture, history, and experience all play a factor in our worldview.

- 8) If we are seeking vision clarity for our life, where does the foundation need to come from, and what questions do I need to ask to determine what lens I am looking through?

The next section refers to this week's message and revolves around our attitude. We will be unpacking this passage of Scripture over the next couple of weeks in smaller sections.

Matthew 6:1-13 (NLT)

"Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ²When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Teaching about Prayer and Fasting

⁵"When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

⁷ “When you pray, don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! ⁹ Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
 may your name be kept holy.
¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
 as it is in heaven.
¹¹ Give us today the food we need,
¹² and forgive us our sins,
 as we have forgiven those who sin against us.
¹³ And don’t let us yield to temptation,
 but rescue us from the evil one.

From The New American Commentary

From illustrations of Jesus’ teaching in relation to the law, Matthew now turns to Jesus’ instruction on the manner in which persons should do God’s will. Correct actions with improper motives still do not please God. The theme of internalizing God’s standards continues, as Jesus stresses the importance of righteous behavior when no one but God is watching as over against public piety designed to elicit human praise rather than to glorify God. The three closely parallel examples of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting focus on three of the cardinal components of Jewish piety¹

9) In Verses 1-6, Jesus is challenging the comfort level of His listeners by speaking about the motives of the heart while taking actions. What are some of the attitudes Jesus is challenging?

The heart attitude described is a desire to be viewed as a super-spiritual person instead of God getting the credit and glory. It is taking the glory upon ourselves. In our culture today we see this displayed through bragging on social media and other places instead of letting the fruit in our lives be the evidence and giving God credit. We take the glory upon ourselves.

10) How can these attitudes be found in our own lives?

11) What is humility?

From Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology

Humility. Biblical humility is grounded in the character of God. The Father stoops down to help the poor and needy (Ps. 113:4–9; cf. 138:6–7); the incarnate Son exhibits humility from the manger to the cross (Matt. 11:29; Acts 8:32–33; Phil. 2:5–8). The dual usage of “meek” (Gk. *praus*) and “humble (*tapeinos* “low”) in heart” in Matthew 11:29 emphasizes Christ’s humility before humankind, whom he came to serve (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27) and his

submission before God. Humility and meekness are often inseparable (2 Cor. 10:1; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12).³

12) What is false humility, and how do Christians confuse the two?

TAKING IT HOME

The *Taking It Home* section is about application to our lives, and in next week's study the *MY STORY* section will refer back to this section. This is to help us develop accountability and encourage our people to put into practice what they are learning in group.

13) What step do you personally need to take to develop a clear vision for your life and attain "the rare air of clarity?"

14) Who can you get to help you accomplish this goal?

In the next section titled *Chair Time Tools*, we have put together some questions for you to sit and pray about during your Chair Time. These are intended to help you develop a clear vision for your life. Take time this week to pray and work through the questions in *Chair Time Tools* because we will be referring to them next week.

CHAIR TIME TOOL

Over the next seven weeks of this study, our goal in the *Chair Time Tools* is to help you prayerfully consider God's vision for your life and by the end write a vision statement for your life.

15) Read Psalm 119 and count how many times it mentions the Word of God. Why is this important?

16) What should be the basis for our vision statement? (Hint: you just counted it in Psalm 119.)

Writing a vision statement for your life must have a foundation. Much like a house we need a foundation to then build the framework. If we are building on anything other than the Bible we are on shaky ground.

17) This week read Matthew 7:24-27 and consider Jesus' words.

¹ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 116.

² Norman L. Geisler, Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics (Grand Rapid, MI Books Baker, 1999), 776.

³ Walter A. Elwell, Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology (Grand Rapid, MI Books Baker, 1996)