

Gathering Guide

for Communities and Friends

“Practices of Pondering”

3/17/19

Where We Are In The Bible

Romans 8 follows Paul’s discourse on salvation in Jesus Christ. After addressing what it means to be a child of God in Jesus, he turns to thoughts around Christian living. But instead of giving a list of do’s and don’ts, he connects the power of the mind to how we live.

Read Romans 8:1-6 out loud in your group.

Lean In

- Have you ever been told, “You can do whatever you put your mind to”? Have you found that to be true?
- What sorts of things occupy your mind these days? Are they healthy thoughts?
- Paul speaks against setting our minds on the “things of the flesh.” In the message, *flesh* is characterized in two parts: impulse and ignorance. What are some of our impulses that we act on without thinking or maintain without evaluating?

The Big Idea

Living to fulfill the things of the flesh is a futile Insanity Loop of life, but setting our minds on the things of the Spirit bring about life and peace.

Where To?

- We tend to think freedom is acting on impulse and doing what comes natural to us, but our faith teaches us that that life is unfulfilling. In addition, our faith teaches that self-control and course correction (repentance) that comes in the Spirit is *actual*/life and peace. Discuss this “reversal” of thinking in your group.
- Read Romans 12:2. Have others described you as “stuck in your ways”? What does it look like to allow God to transform your mind?
- Of the “Practices of Pondering” addressed in the message (study, meditation, guidance), which resonates best with you and why?

Prayer Focus

Creator God, you have formed us with minds that have the great power and responsibility to choose a life according to You or a life according to ourselves. Fill us with your Spirit from top to bottom, so that we might be shaped and formed into the likeness of Jesus. Let us consider our ways before and after, if they are your ways. And where there is need for repentance, receive our confession with grace. Where there is affirmation, let us give you the glory. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

