



Seeking God's Purpose

Last week, we challenged ourselves to move from responding with fear and replacing it with love. How did it feel to let go of fear? Was responding in love easy or difficult? This week, we encounter Jesus in a way we don't often see in scripture. We will also have an opportunity to stretch ourselves in how we view and approach routine things in our lives.

SCRIPTURE: John 2:13-17

DISCUSSION:

Imagine you were there that day in the temple.

How would you have responded if you were a traveler? A money changer? A religious leader? A disciple?

Why are Jesus' words challenging for them and for us?

What are your favorite parts of a worship service?

How do you feel when someone doesn't like that part or if something is not included in a worship service?

Similar to worship practices, there are things that we add into our lives that aren't bad but perhaps become a barrier to connecting more fully with God. Take this moment to name a few that you, your family or group has added.

ACTIVITY:

This week, as your act of fasting, we invite you to consider giving up something in your life that is an obligation. Something that isn't a harmful or bad thing but is an extra layer that is placed on you that could be taking up space for opportunities to grow closer to God and others. An example in many families' lives could be giving your family permission to fast from extracurricular activities this week. Press pause on that violin lesson or basketball practice. Do not say yes to the extra project. Make a point to connect with God as a family in that space during that time.

Share with each other how it feels to make that decision. Was it easy? Was it difficult? We invite you to end your time together with the following prayer.

PRAYER:

God of hope and purpose, we move through our lives in search of you. And when we think we have found you, You continue to surprise us. You have given us the amazing ability to be creative and complex, but sometimes our passion and commitment cloud our ability to find and focus on you alone.

Grant us the courage to allow ourselves space, time, and simplicity, so that we may draw close to you and your purposes for us in your world.

AMEN.