



"Has your relationship with God changed the way you live your life?"
—Francis Chan

It is easy to waste our lives and get complacent with where we are spiritually. We just go with the current of wherever life takes us.

We might stop every now and then to remember what Jesus did for us, and we may be motivated to do something in the moment. We might start a new Bible reading plan or try to hang out with friends who love Jesus. However, as quickly as we started, we get distracted, and it leaves us with no lasting change on how we live our lives.

This summer, I challenge you to take the next step in your faith. STOP whatever you're doing and be honest with God and with yourself. Wherever you are in your walk with God, a little self-examination is always helpful to move you forward.

If not, you will run the danger of going to small group each week, maybe changing one or two things in your life, but with no true heart change. This leads to forgetting what we have read or discussed.

Before we get into aspects of areas where we waste our summer, let's take a moment to evaluate where we are at and why we should even care. After each question, we will take a moment to pray or praise God on what we have reflected from the Scripture. Praying is just as important as reading His Word.

[Author Note: Choose a different student to read each verse, question or prayer prompt below. The questions can either be done in a group or students can break into groups of two to three to pray.]

Questions:

1. *Read James 1:22-25.* These verses challenge us to not just listen to or read God's Word and then forget it.

Heart check: Is this something you struggle with? Why or why not?

- Pray and ask the Lord that as you read and hear God's Word this summer, it would truly change you.
2. *Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-17.* We need to remind ourselves daily of what Jesus did for us in our lives and how it should affect our view of Him.

Heart check: How often do you remember what God has done for you in your life? How does knowing what Jesus has done change the way you live?

- Take a moment and praise God for the work He has done. We love Him because He first loved us! (1 John 4:19)
3. As Christ followers, God is so much more than a thought. He is the One who created us, loves us, and holds all things together. We no longer regard God as the world does, but as a loving Savior. Francis Chan challenges us: "The irony is that while God doesn't need us but still wants us, we desperately need God but don't really want Him most of the time. He treasures us and anticipates our departure from this Earth to be with Him, and we wonder, indifferently, how much we have to do for Him to get by."

Heart check: Is this true of you? Does your life reflect that you want God?

- Pray and ask the Lord for an attitude of obedience and commitment throughout this summer. Commit to making the most of this summer to glorify God with your life!
4. Read this quote: "I am wired by nature to love the same toys that the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call earth 'home.' Before you know it, I am calling luxuries 'needs' and using my money just the way unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war. I don't think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached people drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the triumphs of grace. I sink into a secular mindset that looks first to what man can do, not what God can do. It is a terrible sickness. And I thank God for those who have forced me again and again toward a wartime mindset." - John Piper.

Heart check: Is this something you can relate to? Why or why not? Do you have your mind on things above or on things of this Earth more?

- Pray and ask the Lord to renew your mind and heart this summer.

[Author Note: If you have more time in your small group session, you can do the following Challenge for the Week together. If not, optional Challenge and Verses For the Week are below. Pass out bookmarks with verses for the week.]

Challenge for the Week: Read Colossians 2:6-15. After you read it, underline the characteristics or actions of God you observe from this passage. Then, go back and circle any of the characteristics or actions that we are called to do in this passage.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in a notebook or in your phone. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Psalm 4:4

Day 2 - Jeremiah 17:9-10

Day 3 - Psalm 19:14

Day 4 - Colossians 3:1-2

Day 5 - Proverbs 15:28

Day 6 - 2 Corinthians 13:5