



BREAKING THE ICE

Are you a gardener? If so, what do you garden? What is the longest you have done without watering your plants? What happened over that time?

What is one thing you have been diligent to keep up with in the last 4 months? What is one thing you have neglected?

MAIN CONTENT

This week, Pastor Kevin asked a question, “What do you do when you don’t feel God?” It may not be a comfortable question to answer but there’s hope in answering it.

1. What do you do when you don’t feel God? How does it make you feel when you don’t feel Him?

As we learn more about what it means to follow Jesus, we learn things aren’t always perfect. There are days when following Jesus seems easier and it feels like He is close. Then, there are other days where it can be hard and we don’t feel anything. It’s important to remember both of those are OK. But when He feels far away, we need to seek Him.

Read Proverbs 4:23.

This verse tells us to guard our hearts. What we learned from Jon Acuff last week is, we are what we consume. What we consume affects our hearts. So, in order to guard our hearts, we need to be conscientious of what we are consuming. This requires a lot of attention. Especially right now when there is so much in the world trying to grab our attention.

2. What gets most of your attention during the day?

God wants our attention. He patiently waits for us to seek Him and spend time with Him. When we choose to follow Jesus, He will never forsake us. He will always be right there waiting for us. Even when we feel like He is not close and we are in the desert, the truth is that He is there waiting for us.

MAIN CONTENT

3. Explain a time when you did not feel God's nearness. What brought you through that time? How did you start to feel God's presence again?

In the hard times, the desert times, God is building our faith. God will reveal Himself to us in these spiritually dry times, we just need to ask and look for Him. We also need to ask ourselves why we are spiritually dry. Maybe we need to grieve something or ask God if there is something in our lives keeping us from Him.

4. What are some things that have kept you from growing closer to God? After you discovered them, what did you change to feel God's presence?

We can become spiritually dry and distant from God for a few reasons, sin in our lives or neglecting to take care of our hearts are just a few. When we have sin in our lives and we are unaware, we can ask God to show us what keeps us from Him. He will gently remind us and draw us into repentance and forgiveness with Him.

Sometimes we unintentionally neglect our hearts. With everything we have been through in the last few months, it's easy to see where we may have not pursued God like we used to. We can get in the habit of pursuing something else to give us any clarity or answers we may be looking for.

5. How has your pursuit of God changed over time? Has it brought you closer to Him or do you feel further away?

When we are in a dry, desert season we all need God's rain to fill us up and bring us a fresh outpouring of God's spirit. He wants to fill us up to overflowing so we can help others fill up.

His rain comes when we engage Him. Sometimes engaging God looks like going back to the things we've done in the past to spend time with Him. Maybe that's spending time in His word, listening to worship music and singing along, sitting in the quiet and meditating on Him, or taking a prayer walk and talking to Him.

6. What are some of the ways you've engaged God and felt His presence close to you?

Pastor Kevin mentioned a story from 1st Kings 18. Elijah was praying for rain. It had been three years since there had been rain. He pursued God and believed God was going to bring the rain. He kept faith that God would hear his prayers and answer them. He looked past the drought and desert he was surrounded

by and believed in something bigger, that only God could do.

7. What do you need to believe God for right now? Where do you need His rain and presence in your life?

When we pray and petition God, He hears our prayers. He wants to hear from each of us. Even if it feels like a drought, keep praying and believing Him. He will never forsake you.

PRAYER

God, thank you for being near even though we may not feel you. Let us feel you near us in the midst of our desert and in the midst of everything we are going through. Will you show us what is keeping us from you? Will you reveal to us where we need your rain and presence in our lives to give us hope and the satisfaction of living a life with you? Fill us with joy, hope, peace, mercy, and love. Help us draw near to you and fill us up with your presence.