

LIFE Group Leader Handout

April 2, 2017

Message: Waypoints—Three Critical Decisions on the Path to Transformation

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Scripture—Mark 8:22-26

And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see people, but they look like trees, walking." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. And he sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village."

Main Idea—Jesus is in Control of the Transformation Process—Follow Him!

#1 Jesus Leads Him out of the Village—to a place of greater solitude

CRITICAL DECISION #1--Will I follow where Jesus leads me? The key is our obedience. Will I obey and follow?

#2 Jesus Spits on His Eyes—though He leaned others without doing this.

CRITICAL DECISION #2--CRITICAL DECISION #2 Will I humbly receive God's chosen means of healing? Of transformation? The key is humility.

#3 Jesus Questions Him about His Sight

CRITICAL DECISION #3--3--Will I be honest about my continuing need? The key is honesty.

Application—

- *How do this miracle contribute to my understanding of what Jesus is doing in my life right now?*
- *What critical decision do I need to make?*

THE RIGHT MINDSET TO YOUR SKILL SET

By Alex Tran

The good news is that I (and you) have a unique skill set suitable for leading small groups. 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV) says: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." But more than just the right skill set, we also need the right mindset. That verse reminds us that we should serve others with our gifts, but that we are also stewards. Specifically, you are a steward of people's spiritual growth and development. Stewardship is such a biblical principle that understanding it will transform the way you view and lead your group.

Characteristics of a Steward

Let's take a look at Matthew 25 for what it means to be a steward.

You have been entrusted by God. *Matthew 25:14 says: "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them." Psalm 24:1 says that the earth is God's, including everything in it and everybody on it. So, you have been entrusted with God's most prized possession and His greatest asset in seeing this world come to know Christ. People. Are you earning God's trust or squandering it?*

You are an investor. *Matthew 25:16 says: "The man who had received five bags of gold went at once to put his money to work and gained five bags more." Stewards know they aren't called to just maintain, but grow. Your responsibility as a small group leader is to invest into people and grow them into disciples of Christ. Are you doing that? That requires intentionality with planning and preparing for group each week. Pondering how you can nurture the group towards a deeper, fuller relationship with Christ. Or are you winging it every week with little or no prep? Are you okay just shooting the breeze and socializing most of the time?*

You are held accountable. *Matthew 25:19 says: "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them." All of us will give an account for how we stewarded our lives, actions, opportunities and people (Romans 14:12, 1 Peter 4:5, Matthew 12:36). When God asks how well you've stewarded the people in your group, what will you say? Will people reflect Christ more having been in your group? Will you say "I challenged people to pray out loud which helped increase their faith." or "I led people to love God's word and make it a daily habit in their lives." There is a spiritual burden and responsibility that comes with being a steward.*

How do you think viewing yourself as a steward changes the way you lead and approach your group?