

Leader Guide

What Could be Written About You?

Winter 2026 | Week 6

Message Date 2/15/2026

THE GOAL

This week's goal is to help our group understand that preparation today determines faithfulness tomorrow. Jesus teaches about the most difficult times and calls His followers to endure, prepare wisely, steward opportunity, and focus their efforts on Kingdom work. By the end of the discussion, group members should evaluate whether their walk with Christ reflects fad or faithfulness and identify specific areas where they must prepare, act in faith, and serve others intentionally.

MY STORY

- 1) In thinking about Craig's analogy about the bonsai tree - If your life right now were shaped like a bonsai tree, what stage would it be in; wild sapling, slightly shaped, or masterfully formed?
- 2) What's something you once started with great enthusiasm but didn't stick with very long?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Please read the following passage and answer the following questions

Matthew 24:3-14

- 1) What does Jesus say will characterize the most difficult times?
Deception, fear, persecution, betrayal, and spiritual coldness. Endurance is the defining mark of true faith.
- 2) What does it mean to endure faithfully over time?

I think consistency is a key. As we stay consistent we grow in our trust and keep our focus on the kingdom regardless of circumstances. That's faithfulness.

Read Matthew 24:45-51

3) What separates the faithful servant from the unfaithful servant?

I think one of the keys is trust; we continue to trust when circumstances or God seems to be distant. We lean into responsibility versus drifting into apathy when God feels distant.

4) Where might apathy quietly be forming in your life?

For me (Justin) one of the things that causes apathy in my life is over stimulation in things that are negative. If I constantly put in bad information I become numb and apathetic to the brokenness of the people around me, including the brokenness in myself. Where else does it grow in your life?

Matthew 25:1-5

5) What does the extra oil represent in the parable of the bridesmaids?

I think a lesson in this passage is storing things up for hard times. A realistic thought process for us as Christians is filling our soul with the Word of God. It helps us when times feel darkest. It is the intentional preparation for the long night. I think it shows up when we look forward expectantly to Jesus's return.

6) Does your walk with Jesus reflect fad or faithfulness?

I hope that my life reflects faithfulness. I know that I've struggled and stumbled, but I don't think that's a hallmark of a fad. Fads come and go. I've been with Jesus for 30 something years and I don't plan on leaving.

Matthew 25:14-15

7) What opportunities has God entrusted to you?

The simple answer is time, talents, and treasure. He has given that to all of us. What do we do with our time, talents and treasure is the question.

8) Do you tend to respond to opportunity with faith or fear?

For me (Justin) I think it depends on the situation. Even if my initial reaction is fear that doesn't mean I have to stay there. I think sometimes we think, "oh I must immediately respond with faith," but that may not be your initial reaction. Faith is a choice. So, if I feel fear, I can choose faith and trust Him despite my emotions. In several cases in my life, it's been both and then other times I have absolutely responded in faith.

Matthew 25:31-40

9) In difficult times, where should our efforts be focused?

The simple answer is that it should be focused on others. Taking an honest assessment of what's going on, surrendering my struggles to God and then leaning into being a part of the solution and not just a part of the problem is a guide to help keep focused. I need to check my attitudes and my motives; sometimes I just need to walk through the difficult things and allow Jesus to lead me because He's growing me.

10) What is one practical step you can take this week to be faithful?

For me (Justin) stay in my disciplines. In the Word, in prayer and serving others, stay the course. What about you?

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Where does something in me need to shift from fad to faithful?
- 2) Am I prepared to remain faithful until He returns?
- 3) In the most difficult times, where are my efforts truly directed?