



With Week 4: Not From God

"Life doesn't work without God's presence, but life begins when we live with Him."

Icebreaker: Share a moment from this past week where you felt particularly blessed or grateful. How did this experience impact your perspective on God's presence in your life?

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflection: The sermon highlighted the difference between seeking blessings from God versus seeking a relationship with Him. How do you personally differentiate between the two in your spiritual life?
2. Scriptural Insight: Reflect on the story of the prodigal son from Luke 15:11-24. How does this parable illustrate the importance of relationship over resources? How can we apply this understanding to our daily lives?
3. Personal Application: The sermon suggests naming areas where we seek God's blessings more than His presence. What is one area in your life where you can shift your focus from what you want from God to being with God?
4. Theological Implication: Discuss the concept of God as our "divine vending machine" versus a loving Father. How does this view affect our understanding of prayer and relationship with God?
5. Community Impact: How can our church community foster a culture of "withness"—being with God—rather than focusing solely on what we can receive from Him? What practical steps can we take as a group?
6. Call to Action: Inspired by the sermon's message, what is one specific action you can take this week to deepen your relationship with God, focusing on His presence rather than His gifts



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Scripture Exploration

- Read Isaiah 7:14. What does the name "Immanuel" mean, and why is this significant during Christmas?
- In John 1:1, what does it mean that "the Word was with God, and the Word was God"? How does this relate to the theme of God being with us?
- Examine Luke 15:11-24. What are the key actions and attitudes of the younger son in the parable?

Personal Reflection

- What theological principle can we extract from the story of the prodigal son regarding our relationship with God?
- Consider the quote from Tim Keller mentioned in the sermon: "It's not the repentance that causes the father's love, it's the father's love that enables the repentance." How does this perspective shift your understanding of God's love?
- How does the concept of God as a "divine vending machine" challenge your current understanding of prayer and relationship with God?

Personal Application

- Identify one area in your life where you have been seeking blessings from God rather than seeking God Himself. How can you shift your focus?
- What practical steps can you take this week to cultivate a deeper "with God" relationship, rather than a "from God" relationship?