



LIFEgroups

Discussion Guide 9.4.11

Discussion Opener

What's the scariest or most fun amusement park ride you've ever been on? One of the massive roller coasters at Cedar Point? Or maybe it was one of the rusty carnival rides at Venetian Festival that you're sure was going to fall apart as you careened toward the ground?

Message Recap

This weekend we talked about how life is often like a roller coaster with highs and lows, thrills and terrors. But God wants us to derail the roller coaster and leave it behind. He wants us on the steady, narrow path that leads to Him. To stay on this path we've got to be persistent in seeking out God's identity rather than His activity, remember that He wants the best for us, and to be obedient.

Discussion

Read Matthew 7:7-14

Rough estimate: what percent of your prayer time is spent asking God to do something?

Heal this, bless that, move in this area of my life, open this door, give me a sign...

50 percent? 73.9 percent? Higher?

These aren't bad things to ask for, in fact usually they're really good things, but maybe we're missing a key component of prayer...

What happens when God's activity in our lives - or apparent lack thereof - doesn't match our expectations? *Disappointment. Back down the roller coaster.*

Alright, so does that mean we shouldn't ask for specific things? *Of course not, but...*

How might it change what we ask for?

What does it mean to seek God's *identity* rather than his *activity*?

Read verses 9-11 again.

Do you give a child everything they ask for? Why or why not?

Sure, if you're a grandparent and you're trying to spoil them rotten.

What sort of good gifts does God give?

Peace, joy, and hope in the midst of dark times, a friend who says just the right thing at just the right time, an anonymous gift when you didn't know how you were going to pay that overdue bill...

Can anyone describe a time God surprised you with one of these gifts?

Prayer

Let's spend some time thanking God for who he is and what He's done for us. It's OK if there are times of silence, just speak out specific things you are thankful for as they come to mind. Would someone be willing to wrap up this time of prayer after a few minutes?