

EVER WONDER WHY?

Leader Conversation Guide – Ever Wonder Why? (Part IV)

Main Idea

This week, Pastor Chris continued our “Ever Wonder Why?” series with the question, “Why does God feel so far away?” We learned about how God’s presence is everywhere, including within us as believers! But sometimes, we might not feel like he’s near us. Even Jesus on the cross, experienced this feeling of distance from the Father, when He cried out the words of Psalm 22. “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” If you’ve ever had a sense of distance from God, or are even currently going through that now, you’re not alone! Let’s dig a little deeper and see what practical steps we can take in this kind of season.

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

JEREMIAH 29:13

Make it Practical

- Maybe you’re sensationalizing God’s presence. Read John 6:30. You’re looking for a sign, or some “feeling” rather than desiring to be with Him. Rather than desiring the Giver, you are desiring the gifts. We need to be careful to not sensationalize Him. He’s always there, but if we’re not careful, we over-sensationalize things. “If God were here, my kids wouldn’t act this way. If God were here, my marriage would be better, If God were here, I would already have my healing.” God is always with us, the question is, are we always paying attention?
- Maybe your heart is hardened. Read Isaiah 59:1-2. If we are so distracted in this life, we can be calloused and miss the presence of God. Sometimes we get hurt by someone, or an organization, and we close ourselves off, and we begin to drift away from the Lord. When we drift, it’s not God moving away, it’s us. The number one cause to a hard heart is WILLFUL disobedience of the Lord. In our disobedience, our intimacy with the Lord dwindles.
- Maybe God just wants to draw you closer. James 4:8 says, “Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” We are able to move closer to God by practicing three important character traits: Gratitude, Humility, and Worship. When we strive to live a lifestyle of these traits, we will begin to know God on a more personal and intimate level.

Talk About It

- Which part of this message was most impactful for you and why?
- Have you ever felt far from God? Talk about how that experience impacted your faith.
- Challenges, hard times, and suffering can bring us closer to God. Share a time when you saw God working, even if you didn't sense His presence.

"Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?"

PSALM 139:7-8

Prayer

Father, it can be really frustrating when we feel far from You. Thank You for being bigger than our feelings and for always being with us. Build our faith as we go throughout this week, and reveal any places where we've allowed our hearts to harden. Please help us seek You this week. In Jesus' name, amen.

Leader Tip

Sometimes the best place to experience God is in the simple moments of your day. Ask Group Members to this week, ask God to make His presence clear to you, even in the little things.