

Nothing New Under The Sun

Week 3: Don't Recreate The Wheel

ICEBREAKER

What mentor has had the biggest impact on your life? Why?

INTRODUCTION

God created us in His image with amazing minds and intelligence to interpret the world around us. However, this gift also creates in us the ability to deceive ourselves of our own greatness in making "new" things. This week we will focus on how there is nothing "new" under the sun and how we can best discover and reveal God's truth in our lives.

READ |

If God created everything that has been and will be then there is nothing we can do that is not made in the patterns of God's truth. Just as man discovered that mass cannot be created or destroyed only reshaped and repurposed we can also only recycle ideas and inventions. Everything has been done, there is nothing new under the sun.

*What has been will be again,
what has been done will be done again;
there is nothing new under the sun.* --Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NIV)

The wisdom of the Teacher in Ecclesiastes takes much time in exposing the vanity or meaninglessness of man's toil/work in this life. We are not meant to glorify ourselves and our own accomplishments in this life. We are meant to give glory and praise to the God that designed and created this world for us to explore, find our purpose, and thrive. Ultimately, if we spend all our time focusing on our own plans, toils and the vanity of our own greatness, we will miss the glory of what God has planned for our life.

**Does it give you comfort or stress to hear that there is nothing "new" in this world?
How can you spend more time discovering God's plans for your life?**

READ |

Part of understanding that there is nothing new under the sun is appreciating those who came before us. Respecting and learning from spiritual elders is an important aspect of being a Christian and developing into who God made you to be.

In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."
--1 Peter 5:5 (NIV)

One of the biggest things to slow our learning is pride and thinking that we already know it all. As we grow in our faith we must continuously humble ourselves to be open to what God wants to reveal to us through others. This includes looking for believers who inspire us to want to do better.

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.
--Hebrews 13:7 (ESV)

Since everything has already been learned and done before, following the examples of successful believers can help to reveal God's plan for your life. As we learn from others we grow our perspective which allows us to better see God's truth.

Who do you spiritually admire? How can you follow their example to grow your faith?

READ |

The next verse of the scripture above is "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever", While we have much to learn from our elders and others we must always look to the consistent teachings of Jesus and the example he left us in scripture.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me."
--Matthew 16:24 (NLT)

When we follow Jesus and strive to be Christ like, we are making the decision to choose God's Will for our lives. Jesus teaches us to forgive ourselves, our mistakes and the failures of our actions made while following the world and our own way.

Believing in Christ's sacrifice on the cross makes us all equal in the eyes of God and allows us to have a fresh start in our pursuit of the truth. Learning from Jesus means learning how to sacrifice our old ways in order to receive His grace and mercy.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned by following Jesus?

READ I

Learning will grow your knowledge but it won't change your life until you put the lessons into practice. You can't be a vessel for God's Will if you never leave the dock, so we must walk boldly in faith to find out where it leads us.

God created you special with unique strengths and weaknesses. To discover how God wants to use you we need to understand how God made you.

One of the best and safest ways to walk in faith and discover who you are in Christ is to serve in church. Serving alongside other believers will allow God to refine you and move you into His plans and purposes.

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.
--Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)

Growing in Christ with others will unlock in you God's power and peace to change your life and make you into testimony for God's goodness.

Where can you see yourself serving in church? Who can you speak to within the church to get connected?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

- Examine your ways to see where God is moving in your life and where you are forcing your own will.
- Pray for Him to reveal the knowledge needed to understand His plans and purposes for your life.
- Start a conversation with a spiritual elder for guidance.
- Apply Jesus' teachings to renew your heart and mind.
- Serve in church to discover who you are in Christ.

PRAYER: God, thank You for creating me with a plan and a purpose for my life so that I don't have to invent my own. Reveal to me through others the knowledge and understanding I need to prepare for your plans. Bring people into my life who will speak wisdom and life as I grow into who you made me in Christ. Lead me into opportunities to serve at church that will help me find my purpose and glorify You. In Jesus' name Amen.

READ GOD'S WORD DAILY using S.O.A.P.

Day 1:

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

Psalms 32:8 (NIV)

Day 2:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:7 (ESV)

Day 3:

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

1 Peter 2:21 (NIV)

Day 4:

And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Acts 5:42 (ESV)

Day 5:

But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

John 14:26 (NLT)

TIPS FOR ONLINE SMALL GROUP

1. **HOSTING A SMALL GROUP MEETING ON ZOOM.** If you are interested in hosting a small group on zoom through New Hope Windward, let us know. Our small group team will help you get started. Zoom training is available.
2. **EMAIL INVITE.** Ensure to send out a calendar invite with the meeting details and how to connect to the meeting platform on zoom.
3. **REMINDER DURING THE WEEK.** Keep everyone in your group connected by sending a reminder during the week of your upcoming small group meeting.
4. **START ON TIME & STICK TO YOUR TIME SCHEDULE.** For your scheduled meetings, it's recommended to get started within 5 minutes of your scheduled start time. Most small group meetings are held for about 60 minutes.
5. **ZOOM'S BEST PRACTICE.** Familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time.
6. **DOWNLOAD ZOOM APP.** In order to participate in the Online Small Group, download the Zoom App from your iPhone or Android. You may also download the Zoom App from your laptop PC or iPad device.

TIPS TO IN-PERSON GROUP

1. **START & FINISH ON TIME.** Doing this will show your small group you value their time.
2. **BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE.** Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.
3. **CONFIDENTIALITY IS IMPORTANT.** Confidentiality is the key to building trust in relationships. Here are a few mottos to remember to be confidential: "What is said in small group, stays in small group." **Nothing, nobody, never...** *"Share nothing, to nobody, never"* outside of the group.
4. **MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY.** Communicate in advance when you will be unable to attend by either calling and/or texting your host or responding to the zoom email invitation by accepting or declining. This will help your host to plan accordingly especially if it is an in person small group gathering.
5. **AVOID TALKING or TEACHING TOO MUCH.** Small groups are designed for everyone to share and grow together.
6. **ASK FOR HELP.** The Small Group Ministry is here to help. Email smallgroups@nhww.org to ask any questions, request training or other assistance for your Small Group.