



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“Lost: How To Not Get Lost”

Dr. Rice Broocks - October 18, 2015

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- What is one of your all-time favorite books (other than the Bible)? Why?
- Who was a really good friend growing up? Why?
- Have you ever been involved in sales? What did you learn about yourself?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

Lost is defined several ways in the dictionary. Not knowing one's whereabouts is a definition given. It implies the need for a reference point. In biblical terms we have become dislocated from God.

Getting lost spiritually is relatively easy to do. For every step one takes away from God, there will be somebody standing there saying that the person is doing the right thing.

One of the great mistakes of popular American preaching is the emphasis made on self-fulfillment instead of self-denial. If our focus is merely on self-fulfillment instead of obedience to God, we will inevitably go astray from God. Obedience to God is sometimes painful in the short run. But in the long run it always satisfies and fulfills more deeply than any supposed path of self-fulfillment.

There are some basic practical lifestyle habits that we can develop which will keep us from losing our way from God.

1. Develop and maintain the habit of reading Scripture.

Hebrews 2:1 ESV *Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.*

The voices of the culture around us will slowly lead us astray by sheer saturation, if we do not continue to keep our minds adjusted by God's words in Scripture. But if we continue to read the Bible, we will hold on to our spiritual anchor, who is none other than God himself. He is our referent point, our true North. Scripture helps us see the disparity between the world around us and the way things should be if we were properly aligned with God and were doing his will. Scripture challenges us to live for God, while simultaneously speaking mercy, grace, and hope to us. It is one of the most important means by which God makes himself known to us and feeds us spiritually.

2. Develop and maintain close friendships with a group of Christians.

Hebrews 3:12-14 ESV *Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.*

Left to ourselves all of us have a tendency to go astray. From the pressures and cares of life to our own natural desires, which are often fueled by a culture that is spiritually adrift, we experience a pull on our hearts and minds that leads us away from God. One of the great antidotes to these tendencies is the positive influence of Christian friendships. Even Jesus surrounded himself with a small group of men, with whom he shared his life and whom he called friends. Each of us needs Christian friendship. We need others in our lives who can tell when we are not doing well.

3. Develop and maintain the habit of talking to others about the Gospel.

James 5:19-20 ESV My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Talking to others about the Gospel not only invites God's blessing on us, but helps us remember all that God has done for us. It keeps before our minds the stark contrast between the culture around us and the eternal kingdom of God. Being ready to talk to others about the Gospel requires us to live a spiritually prepared life. Talking to others keeps us on the path toward God.

A great tool to use in starting a conversation about belief in God is the **God Test** app, which is available on iTunes and Google. It is comprised of two sets of ten questions, the first of which is simply, "Do you believe in God?" One set is designed to guide a conversation about a person's beliefs if they believe in God. The second set is for someone who says they do not believe in God. The app also comes with information that will help someone know how to engage a person based on their answers and provide some helpful, thoughtful responses to their answers.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- How would you describe your practice of reading Scripture? Is it regular? Is it meaningful? How is it helping you spiritually?
- How would you describe your Christian friendships? Do you have some close ones? How well do your Christian friends know you? How do they help you spiritually?
- How would you describe your efforts to talk to others about the Gospel? Are they frequent? Are they difficult? How does talking to others about God and the Gospel affect you spiritually?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray that God will help us develop and maintain the practices of reading Scripture daily, developing close Christian friendships, and talking to others about God and the Gospel.
- Pray that God will reveal anything in our lives that is pulling us away from him, and also show us how to deal with it and radically circumvent its influence.
- Pray that God will help us bring people back to God who have strayed from him.