

# SUMMER

AT HIGHLANDS

## Part 5

### Big Idea

This week, as we celebrated the Fourth of July with Part Five of Summer At Highlands, Pastor Layne talked about the importance of living in dependence rather than independence. While independence is important for our country as a whole, it is not great for us as individuals. We often buy into the myths that we need to be personally independent because we can't help ourselves (we just need to be who we are), we must protect ourselves (because people only hurt us), or we can take care of ourselves (we don't need anyone else). These mindsets lead to isolation and chaos in our lives, resulting in unanticipated bondage. It's easy to confuse "independence" with "freedom," but these words don't really mean the same thing. Jesus didn't die for our independence – He died for our freedom. And true freedom comes from living in dependence on the right things. We need to live in dependence on prayer. As we praise God and seek His presence and power, we lay a foundation of dependence on Him, and He gives us access to power that we don't naturally possess. We also need to live in dependence on people. We cannot accomplish what God has purposed for our lives if we are isolated from the support of community. He created us to thrive in relationships! And we need to live in dependence on promise. In the midst of confusion or difficulty, we will endure if we hold fast to the truth of God's Word. His promises are a constant source of hope in every situation. As believers, let's make every day a dependence day, living in constant dependence on God. It is then that we will live in true freedom.

*"For He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins."* – Colossians 1:13-14 NLT

### Discussion Questions

- Talk about the first time you experienced independence in your life, whether it was going off to college or getting your first job. How did you handle your newfound independence? What about that season was different than you'd imagined it would be?
- Discuss Paul's transformation from a life of self-sufficiency to a life of dependence (found in Philippians 3:5-9 NLT). How have you had a similar experience in your own life? What changes have you seen as a result of living in dependence on God rather than yourself?
- Talk about the three ways we can live in dependence: on prayer, people, and promise. Which of these has been crucial in your most recent season of life? How has living in dependence on these things made a difference?

### Prayer Focus

Thank God for being trustworthy of your dependence. Praise Him for His faithfulness and the freedom that He has brought to your life. Confess your dependence on Him, and ask Him to help you release control of your life to Him. Ask Him to help you pray with boldness and find true friends on whom you can rely. And proclaim your belief in the truth of His Word!

### Next Step

Evaluate whether you're living in dependence on yourself or on God, and commit to depending on God every day. Seek God daily in prayer. Consider leading a small group so that you can connect with people who you can support and challenge. Make a list of the promises of God and write them down in a place where you will see them every day.

### Leader Tip

When ministering to someone in your group, remember ESPN.

Encourage, Share Scripture, Pray, Next Steps.