

My Church _____

Leader Conversation Guide—Living in the Tree of Life

Main Idea

This week, Pastor Chris shared Part Three of the “My Church” series to help us re-center our hearts on the mission and values of Church of the Highlands. This message focused on the defining distinctive that at Highlands, we “live in the Tree of Life.” The way we approach God will determine our relationship with Him. Genesis 2:8-9 gives us a framework for two different mindsets with which people approach God: through the Tree of Life or through the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

“Do more to get to God.”

“Try to get God’s approval.”

Focuses on the external.

“Obey out of duty.”

Tree of Life

“Receive what Jesus already did.”

“Receive God’s love for me.”

Focuses on the internal.

“Obey out of delight.”

Make It Practical

- We can live in the Tree of Life by falling in love with Jesus. We can fulfill the commands of the Bible better by falling in love with God rather than trying to obey everything.
- We can live in the Tree of Life by responding to sin with life. Jesus came to set us free, not make us sorry.
- We can live in the Tree of Life by guarding our hearts from going back to the mindset of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. We need to remember that a life-giving relationship with Jesus is the only source of true fulfillment.

“Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

1 John 5:12

Talk About It

1. How does learning the mindsets of the Tree of Life vs. the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil challenge how you currently approach God?
2. Of the three ways we can practically live in the Tree of Life, which is most challenging for you, and why?
3. As a group, have an honest discussion about whether you approach your Christian life with a mindset of duty or delight. Encourage each other with ways you can pursue relationship with God vs. religion.

“Human history is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.”

- C.S. Lewis

Prayer

Father, let us be a church and people who live in the Tree of Life. Help us fall in love You like never before, respond to sin with life, and guard our hearts from going back to religion. Serving You is our delight ,and we surrender our lives to You, Jesus!

Leader Tips

- We want everyone at Highlands to experience freedom and live in the Tree of Life. If some of your group members haven't been through a Freedom Small Group yet, encourage them to pray about attending one this Small Groups semester.

