Small Group Guide: QUESTIONS-WISDOM-THEOLOGY - Why Don't I Always Feel God?

Opening Question

What is something small that instantly gets your attention - a smell, a sound, a song, or a notification?

Opening Prayer

Lord, thank You for bringing us together. Help us to be open, honest, and encouraged as we talk about what it means to know Your presence. Teach us to listen for Your voice, trust Your promises, and take the next step You are leading us toward. In Jesus' name, amen.

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

God is not playing hide-and-seek with us. Jesus said to ask, seek, and knock, and God promises to be present with His people.

Feeling God's presence is not always dramatic or emotional. God can work through powerful moments, but He often speaks through a gentle whisper, quiet conviction, Scripture, or a simple prompting.

A hardened heart can make it difficult to perceive God's voice. Disappointment, hurt, unmet expectations, or disillusionment can cause us to pull back from God.

Obedience matters. Pastor Dan emphasized that God often leads us one step at a time. If we ignore the last thing God showed us, we may struggle to hear what He wants to show us next.

Sin creates relational distance from God. It does not mean God stops loving us, but unconfessed sin can block our ability to experience closeness with Him.

Confession and repentance restore intimacy. Confession means agreeing with God about what is wrong; repentance means changing direction.

God's presence is promised to believers. Even when we do not feel Him, the Holy Spirit dwells in those who belong to Christ.

God pursues us with love, not condemnation. The enemy condemns, but the Holy Spirit convicts in order to restore us.

Discussion Questions

1. **Read Luke 11:9-10.** Jesus says to ask, seek, and knock. What does this passage teach us about God's willingness to be found by those who seek Him?

2. **Read Hebrews 13:5.** God says, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' How can this promise help us when we do not feel God's presence?

3. **Read 1 Kings 19:11-13.** God was not in the wind, earthquake, or fire, but came in a gentle whisper. Why do you think we sometimes expect God to speak only in dramatic ways?

4. **Read John 14:21.** Jesus connects love, obedience, and His self-revelation to us. How does obedience help us become more aware of God's presence?

5. **Read Isaiah 59:1-2 and Psalm 51:7, 12.** What do these verses teach us about sin, confession, and restoration?

6. Pastor Dan said we sometimes over-sensationalize God's presence. What are some ordinary ways God may be working or speaking that people might overlook?

7. Disappointment can sometimes harden our hearts toward God. What helps a person remain open to God when life does not unfold the way they expected?

8. Pastor Dan shared a story about responding to a prompting from God to go back and pray for someone. What are some practical ways we can become more attentive to those gentle-whisper moments?

Practical Applications (Choose one or two.)

1. **Practice asking, seeking, and knocking this week.** Spend a few minutes each day intentionally asking God to make you more aware of His presence.

2. **Pay attention to the gentle whisper.** Look for quiet promptings from God through Scripture, prayer, a person in need, or a moment of conviction.

3. **Take the next step of obedience.** Ask yourself, 'What is the last thing God clearly showed me to do?' Then take one practical step toward obeying it.

4. **Make confession a regular habit.** Set aside time this week to honestly talk with God about any sin, distraction, or attitude that may be creating distance.

5. **Choose truth over feelings.** When you do not feel God, remind yourself of His promises - especially that He will never leave or forsake His people.

Memory Verse for This Week

Hebrews 13:5b - 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that Your presence is not dependent on our emotions. Thank You for loving us, pursuing us, and speaking to us. Help us not to harden our hearts or ignore Your promptings. Give us courage to confess, repent, and obey the next step You place before us. May we become more aware of Your Spirit in our daily lives. In Jesus' name, amen.