

Bible Study

Quick recap

The group conducted a Bible study focused on Revelation 3, where Michael led the discussion about the messages to the churches in Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The conversation explored themes of spiritual commitment, repentance, and the different types of "works" that God judges - distinguishing between worldly employment and true spiritual service. Robert shared his personal struggles with maintaining his Christian commitment after returning from missions trips to the Dominican Republic, expressing concerns about losing his spiritual momentum and the need for genuine repentance. The discussion highlighted how modern American concepts of stability and success often conflict with true biblical living, with Michael emphasizing that true spiritual work should mirror Jesus's example of prioritizing God's kingdom over worldly pursuits.

Next steps

Robert

- Follow up with his father about the possibility of watching the cats so Robert can attend tomorrow's meeting, and inform Michael if he can attend. 📅
- Consider reaching out to his church or support network for potential financial help to participate in the upcoming missions trip to the Dominican Republic. 📅
- Reflect on and, if convicted, engage in a meaningful act of repentance to restore closer relationship with God, possibly including speaking with a pastor or engaging in personal prayer. 📅

Collaboration

- All attendees (especially Robert, as discussed): Focus on prioritizing time with God and spiritual disciplines over worldly pursuits, and consider practical steps to maintain spiritual momentum after missions trips or times of closeness with God. 📅
- All attendees: Continue to examine and strengthen their spiritual works and commitment to God, as discussed in reference to Revelation 2 and 3, and repent where needed to return to

or maintain first love and faithfulness. 📋

Summary

Sacrificial Hospitality and Missionary Service

Michael shared his experience from a church service at Eastside where the pastor discussed the biblical example of Gaius, emphasizing sacrificial hospitality and giving beyond one's means to support missionaries. The discussion highlighted how modern Christians can serve as spiritual missionaries regardless of whether they travel abroad, and referenced how early missionaries trusted God's provision through the church. Jonathan shared a personal story about a long-term missionary couple who had been serving overseas for 25 years, though their exact location remained undisclosed for security reasons.

Missions Experience and Spiritual Growth

Robert discussed his experience with a potential job opportunity at Target that fell through, which allowed him to maintain his morning routine with the Lord. He shared his experiences participating in missions trips to the Dominican Republic with FCA, where he helps build water reservoirs and teaches lacrosse to children in slums. Robert expressed his challenge of maintaining the spiritual momentum he gains during these trips when returning to the distractions of life in the United States. The conversation concluded with Robert considering attending a meeting the next day, pending his father's ability to watch his cats.

Bible Study: Revelation Messages

Michael led a prayer and Bible reading session focused on Revelation 3, discussing messages to the churches of Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. He emphasized themes of watchfulness, perseverance, and repentance, highlighting the importance of keeping God's word and being neither lukewarm nor cold in faith. The session concluded with a call to hear and follow the Spirit's guidance for the churches.

Bible Reference to Ancient Philadelphia

Robert discussed his discovery about Philadelphia being mentioned in the Bible, particularly in Revelation 3:7-13, which references the ancient city's worship of Zeus and the Roman imperial

cult. Jonathan clarified that the reference was to the ancient city in modern-day Turkey, not Pennsylvania, and explained that Jesus was addressing his suffering church in Philadelphia. Michael commented on how the verse highlights the difference between having a religious reputation and truly being alive in Christ, using the example of people who hold Christian titles but may not be led by the Spirit.

Returning to Christian Faith Discussion

Robert discussed his struggle with returning to a strong Christian faith after going through a period of self-pursuit in college, which led him away from his previous commitment to spreading the word. Michael referenced Bible verses about repentance and holding fast to one's faith, encouraging Robert to return to his previous close relationship with God. Robert acknowledged that he had not done true repentance since his confirmation in 10th grade and recognized the need to reconnect with his faith.

Bible Study: Revelation 2 Insights

Michael discussed a Bible study about Revelation 2, explaining how Jesus categorizes different types of people - those who are walking, lukewarm, or running the race, but not at their previous pace. He emphasized that all these groups need to repent and return to right standing with God, contrasting biblical stability with modern American concepts of success. Michael shared his personal experience of repenting after studying this passage and expressed gratitude for not being as convicted about it currently.

Biblical vs Societal Work Standards

Michael and Robert discussed the difference between societal and biblical standards of "work," with Michael explaining that God judges people based on spiritual work rather than traditional employment. They explored how seeking validation through conventional jobs can conflict with pleasing God, using examples from Revelation and other biblical passages. The conversation concluded with Michael confirming that their regular meetings would continue, and they ended with a prayer.