

TAKEAWAY

Fighting Shadows: Ambition

In line with our goal to be a church of disciples who make disciples, this session is focussed on action, so that we are 'doers of the word' and not just hearers/people who enjoy a good discussion! It encourages focussed practical outcomes in the lives of the individuals in the group so that our discipleship as followers of Jesus is deliberately pursued.

SHARE

- What's on your bucket list?
- When you think about your future – what are some of the hopes and dreams for your life?
- How would you define ambition?
- What kind of ambition (or lack of) did you see modeled growing up? What lessons did you learn about ambition in your adolescent years (either directly or indirectly)?

READ

Philippians 2:1-11

DISCUSS

How would you describe selfish ambition? Where do you see this at play in the world today?

Where are you most tempted or driven by selfish ambition? (idols of fame, money, accomplishments)

What do you think godly ambition looks like?

How does Paul's words about Jesus to the Philippians shape how we are to view ourselves and move forward towards godly ambition?

EXPLAIN

On Sunday, we explored that godly ambition...

1. Is all about attitude
2. Seeks God's will
3. Makes God's name great, not ours

1. All About Attitude

Our ambitions can be either selfish or godly depending on our attitude. For example, you could have an ambition to make a lot of money to either a) live an extravagant lifestyle (selfish ambition) or b) to provide for your family, be hospitable and generous for God's kingdom (godly ambition)

DISCUSS

Can you think of any other examples where your ambition might be selfish or godly depending on your attitude?

There may be some grey areas in regards to ambition (e.g. competitive sport). How can we make sure our ambitions in these areas don't become selfish? How can you show godly character in competitive industries?

2. Godly Ambition Seeks God's Will

READ

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

DISCUSS

What are the instructions given to the Thessalonians?

These instructions were given so that their daily lives may be an example to non-believers. Ambition isn't always extravagant. It can be to live an ordinary hardworking life, being an example to others. How can this shape how we see godly ambition?

How would your ambitions for life change if you sought God's will before your own? What kind of things might he call you to?

3. Godly Ambition makes God's name great, not ours

QUOTE

'The only way we can fight our thirst for glory is to be consumed with His.' – Amy Dimarcangelo

DISCUSS

How can being focused more on God's glory help fight our own thirst for glory?

When we want to make God's name great, we're more conscious about how our actions reflect on God, not us. We're more concerned that we work with integrity and that we don't exploit anyone on the way. We begin to want to grow in our skills, so that they can bless other people, not ourselves. We're careful about how we steward our money, how we steward our bodies as an act of worship.

Where are you most tempted to make your own name great instead of God's?

Where can you make God's name great in your life? What practically can you do to achieve this?

PRAY

Pray that we would be consumed with God's glory, not ours.

Pray that the shadow of selfish ambition would go.

Pray that God would give each of us godly ambition for our lives.

TRY OUT

1. **Read the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-15) every day this week.** Reflect on how this can help shape godly vision and ambition.

or

2. **Spend some time reflecting on where the shadow of ambition impacts your life.** Think about the things you gave your time and attention to in the past year or so that were fueled by ambition. The relationships, ideas, work opportunities, financial moves, etc. What did that cost you? Have your actions been motivated by worldly ambition or a Godly ambition? In light of a Kingdom vision, is this a worthy pursuit? Ask Him to redeem any worldly ambition in your heart for His Kingdom and His purposes.

or

3. **Reflect and pray over the problems, pains, people and issues that you see around you in the week (at work, school or in your community).** If you are not sure where God is calling you to have godly vision, ask Him to show you His heart for what you notice and ask Him to use you to bring about His kingdom.