

Summer Playlist

Summer Playlist Series

"Preparing For What's Next" - Mike Ashcraft

Small Group Material

June 3rd, 2018

Leader Guide

Bottom Line: *The disruption of our rhythms can serve as a great season of preparation.*

Study Verses: *Isaiah 43:18-22, Luke 5:36-39, Matthew 7:7-8*

Define The Win: *Participants would recognize their tendency to resist change and cling to things of the past. They would embrace the disruption summer brings and utilize it to prepare their hearts for the fall.*

Key Points

- *Everything always changes.*
- *New things require new ways.*
- *In order to embrace the new, you have to let go of the old.*
- *Change breeds fear.*
- *The more anxious we feel about change, the more we fear the future. The more we fear the future, the harder we hold onto the past.*
- *We don't tolerate disruptions to our comfort and routine.*
- *We aren't asking to see what we're already looking for. We're asking Him to help us see something new.*
- *We end up holding onto things of the past without even realizing it.*

- *Our desire for the predictable past soon outweighs our hope for the potential of the future.*
- *God brings life to dead places.*

ENCOUNTER

- **What happens to your spiritual life and pursuit of God during the summer months? Do you find it easier or harder to work on your walk with Christ when you encounter the summer disruption?**
- **Why does change breed fear? How do you tend to respond to disruptions to your comfort and routine?**
- **How does fear of the future influence what we do with our past?**

FORMATION

- **Read Isaiah 43:18-22. Why were the people unable to see the new things God was doing in their midst? What is required in order to embrace the new?**
- **Read Luke 5:36-39. Why are the new and old incompatible with each other? How are sin management and personal improvement old and ineffective ways of transforming the human heart?**
- **Read Matthew 7:7-8. What promises does this passage contain for those who relentlessly pursue God?**

EXPRESSION

- **What aspect of your heart, character, and faith have you procrastinated in addressing?**
- **What things of the past are you unwilling to let go of and release? Why do you cling to them? What would it look like for God bring life to this dead place?**
- **How can you utilize the summer disruption to prepare your heart for the fall?**

LEADER INSIGHT: *Summer is a disruption to the rhythm we've lived in for the past nine months. It may very well be a welcome disruption, but we lose our groove nevertheless. So, we want to embrace the disequilibrium of summer and use it to prepare us for the fall.*

Why? Because for as much as we love the longer days, the warmer weather, and hanging by the pool, it is only a matter of time before we find ourselves

complaining about the humidity, traffic, and frizzy hair. We'll yearn for fall to come and before we know it, it will be here.

But, will we be ready for it? When fall arrives, will our eyes be searching and paying attention to where God is moving in our lives? Or, will our procrastination get the better of us? How can we utilize the summer to grow our faith? What would it look like to leverage the sixty summer weekdays to prepare our heart, mind, and soul for something new?

Embracing the new isn't something that comes naturally to us. Change breeds fear. The more anxious we feel about the change, the more we fear the future. The more we fear the future, the harder we hold onto the past. When things get familiar, they get comfortable. We like comfortable and we don't tolerate disruptions to our routine very well. We end up holding onto things of the past without even realizing it. Our desire for the predictable past soon outweighs our hope for the potential of the future.

Instead of pursuing heart transformation, we settle for the old and ineffective ways of change known as sin management and personal improvement. They are controllable and something we can accomplish through our own strength. But, the old always lets us down and can only get us so far. New things require new ways - new perspectives, new thoughts and new disciplines. God has the power to bring life to dead places, but only if we allow Him.

The disruption of our rhythms can serve as a great season of preparation. If we're intentional, it leads to new perspectives, new understandings and a new level of trust. Scripture says that those who ask receive, those who search find and those who knock will have doors opened. We can rest on this promise in the midst of this time of preparation.

We aren't asking to see what we are already looking for. We are asking Him to help us see something new by opening our eyes and learning to be expectant for the new things He wants to do in us and through us.