



Still Room For Wonder Series
Small Group Material
Leader Guide

Part 3 - "Filling The Room"
December 10th, 2017

Bottom Line: *We take in Christ's love so that it takes over our hearts.*

Study Verses: *Matthew 6:33-34, Ephesians 3:16-19*

Define The Win: *Participants would continue to reflect on where their eyes are set and how that's influencing their response to the world. They would take the time to articulate their view of God/Jesus and see if that lens lines up with how He is described in Scripture. Group members would pinpoint places where they need to slow down and focus on formation rather than expression.*

Key Points

- *The desires of our heart drive everything we do.*
- *Encounter: what we see. Formation: what we become. Expression: what we do.*
- *We will do desperate things when we long to be loved.*
- *Jesus invites us to change where we set our eyes.*
- *Our lives flow out of what is inside our hearts.*
- *Your heart is changed by what you see.*
- *We're often looking for what we already believe.*
- *To seek is to look for something. To stare at something is to take it in.*
- *We run to expression too quickly.*

- *Attention is a cheap substitute for love.*
- *We want to seek before we notice. But, we must notice once we see.*
- *When you are filled with His fullness there is no room for shame, fear and regret.*

ENCOUNTER

- We will do desperate things when we long to be loved. Over the years what have you looked to in your search to be loved?
- How has this drive to be loved influenced your relationships with others (people pleasing, insta likes, attention seeker, etc.)? In what ways did it impact the way you approach God?
- What do you see when you look at Jesus? Where did this viewpoint or impression of Him come from? Would you say this lens lines up with how He's described in Scripture? Why or why not?
- What's the difference between seeing God's work and seeing God's worth?

FORMATION

- Read Matthew 6:33-34. How is "seek first God's kingdom" both a command and invitation? Why is Jesus so concerned about the lens we use to view the world around us?
- Read Ephesians 3:16-18. How does one begin to grasp how "wide, long, high and deep the love of Christ" is? Why does this involve more than just seeking but taking the time to stare intently at God's greatness?
- Read Ephesians 3:19. What promise does this passage contain to those who pursue God's heart?

EXPRESSION

- What circumstances are you facing where you need to stop jumping to conclusions and looking for what you already believe? How can you begin to see this situation differently?
- Is God getting bigger or smaller in your world? What makes you answer in the way that you do?
- Where are you rushing to expression too quickly? How can you pause, reflect and let God's Word form you in this area?

LEADER INSIGHT: *We do desperate things when we long to be loved. We will go to dramatic lengths to experience love, confirm we are loved or to show others we are lovable. From people pleasing and attention seeking to fixing our behavior and becoming a doormat, there is nothing off limits to what we're willing to do in order to experience that elusive thing called love. All of these responses focus on our behavior and working towards being worthy of love. If we can just perform, act and look worthy than maybe we actually will be worthy.*

This perspective on human love we transfer over to our interactions with God. We have to clean up our behavior and get our act together before we can approach Him. And if, and when, we mess up, we reason all that hard work was for nothing. We head back to the starting line all over again.

Yet, Christ's love is so drastically different than that of the world. And because of this reality, we have to see God from a different perspective than the default lens we use to see Him. The command to seek first His Kingdom is a gracious command to align our hearts with, not only what it wants the most, but in fact what it was made for.

Understanding we are loved by Christ transforms the way we see everything else. This is why Jesus invites us to change where we set our eyes. He understood the connection between our eyes and our hearts. Our hearts are changed by what we see, but our lives flow out of what is inside our hearts. The desires of our heart drive everything we do.

To seek is to look for something. To stare at something is to take it in. We take in Christ's love so it takes over our hearts. This can only happen when we look intently at who God is. This doesn't happen in a rush. It won't occur in an instant. It's impossible to experience unless we're willing to let go of our perspective.

Everything begins with an encounter where what we see is influenced, challenged or impacted. It might be a conversation with a friend, facing difficult circumstances, a challenging Scripture or a situation where our faith is tested. These encounters have the ability to form and shape our heart as well as widen our perspective of God's love and His faithfulness. As a result of these encounters and the formation process that comes with it, our hearts express themselves in relation to what they know. We can't run to expression too quickly. We must slow down and let these moments transform us by changing the way we view God.