

# SHORT TAKES

## Short Takes Week 1

### Opening Prayer

God, be with us today as we look at a couple of parables and the wisdom they express. Help us to apply those to our lives today.

### Talk It Over

This week we looked at a couple of different parables or stories Jesus told in the bible. These particular parables point us to the adventure Jesus invites us into by passionately pursuing him.

- What are some things you would say you are passionate about?
- Is there anything you do in your current daily life to expand or spend time on that passion?

### Read Matthew 13:44-46 NLT

Jesus communicates that the kingdom of heaven is a treasure worth more than anything we can obtain as a personal possession. This gift is worth leaving everything in order to pursue our relationship with God with all that we have. In other words, God wants this journey to become our passion.

- During difficult times it is easy to pull back on passionately pursuing our relationship with God. Do you find that to be true in your life? Do you pursue him more or less in difficult times?
- If you notice yourself pulling away and not pursuing God with as much passion, what do you notice during that season? Do you find yourself pursuing other passions?

### Read Hebrews 10: 24-25 NLT

We are wired for meaningful relationships and purpose. When we feel lost one of the best things we can do is connect in community. That can feel counter intuitive when life is hard. This journey was not designed to be "just me and Jesus". We need each other.

- Is it easy for you to connect with others or do you tend to spend more time alone?
- If you have taken that brave step to connect with others, how has that worked for you? Talk about the hard parts and the great parts.

### Read Lamentations 3:40 MSG and 1 John 1:9 NLT

We will find ourselves burnt out and frustrated when we pursue a passion without taking care of the condition of our soul matters. In order to explore that we need to take some time to be still before God and to allow him to fill us before we pursue. We need nourishment before we can move forward.

- How is the condition of your soul? When you quiet yourself what emotions come to the surface?
- Are there areas you need God to intervene in, or to point out for you to improve upon, so that you can improve the condition of your soul? **(Continued on next page.)**

- Is there someone in your life you need to have a trusted conversation with in order to pursue soul care and healing?

### **Read James 1: 23-25 NLT**

In the passionate journey with God, the pursuit of surrender becomes an important spiritual practice. If we want to be obedient we have to be willing to hear what he is asking and release control or let go of the way we think things should play out. This is surrender!

- Is surrender something you recognize in your spiritual life? How do you practice it?
- Knowing is not understanding. Acting upon what we know brings the understanding. In what ways are you acting on what you know?
- Do you have a story where God had you share something with someone and in your obedience you saw a positive outcome? If so, and you feel comfortable, share that story.

### **Closing Prayer**

God, we are humbled by the invitation to passionately pursue you. Help us to practice prioritizing, connecting in community, taking care of our souls, and walking in obedience to you. Stir in us a desire to sit still before you this week as the first step in passionately pursuing you.

### **Challenge**

Try a practice of meditation or silent prayer this week. See if you can practice for 5 mins 3 different times over the next 7 days.