



Men's Golf Fellowship

Speaker Discussion Questions

David Nixon

Leader's Guide

Spiritual Topics: Dreams & Ambitions, Prayer, Plan of God

About the Talk

David Nixon moved from Australia to fulfill a dream to make family-friendly films. God took David on a journey to replace David's dream with His plan and teach him the invaluable lessons of the power of prayer, God's providence and humility toward the plan of God for your life. Let's use our time together to reflect on those themes in our own lives.

Discussion Questions

- David moved from Australia in order to fulfill his dream of making what he termed "movies with a message". What were your dreams and ambitions when you were a child? How about as an adult? Did you achieve any of them? If so, how? How did either pursuing or achieving your dreams affect your life positively or negatively? *(Leader Note: Francis Chan has said, "Our greatest fear should not be failure, but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter." Read the quote and ask if the achievement of their dreams had any negative effects on their lives, such as being self-centered, putting God on the back burner, negative effects in their relationships, etc.)* What dreams do you still have for your future? **Related Scripture: Matthew 5:6 – Pursuing the things that matter**

- *Where we're going:* **Giving your life over to God.** Sometimes people pursue the wrong goals in their lives because they do not have the right eternal goals in mind, such as a deep, abiding relationship with God and concern for His kingdom.
- *Going Deeper:* Tim Keller has said, "God just doesn't want your life, but your dreams too". What do you think he meant by that? Now read Genesis 22. What dream was God asking Abraham to give up? Sometimes God challenges you to even give up a good dream/ambition for a better one...His. Have you ever had an experience where your dreams and ambitions have been challenged? Do you have a dream like Abraham,

which you would not be willing to give up? A very powerful dream in most people's lives is the dream of retirement. People save their whole lives for it and then spend decades "enjoying" it. Discuss what that dream looks like. How difficult would it be to give that dream up? Under what circumstances would you be willing to? *Deeper yet:* David said that his dream came true, "as soon as he got out of the way". And when he did, "God showed him what He could do". Many times, that's the way God works. It is not until we give everything over to him that God shows us His power. Read the story of Gideon (Judges 7:1-8, 19-22). What if God asked you to do something like that in your life...would you listen? What would obeying God to an extreme degree look like in your life? Think of something that God could ask you to do that would seem crazy to your friends and family?

- David talked about now that he can look back at what God was doing 10 years earlier, he can see God's plan more clearly. He spoke of how *Facing the Giants* came out right after Mel Gibson's hugely successful *The Passion of the Christ*. Hollywood then began seeking out more faith-based films to produce, which paved the way for all his other films to be produced. Many times we cannot see the plan of God at the time, but only in the rear view mirror, so to speak. Have you ever considered that God might have a plan for your life? If so, have you ever pushed back against His will for your life, or gone in another direction, putting your will, desires and ambitions before God's? (*Leader Note: Proverbs 16:9 as well as Jesus' prayer in Luke 22:42 both teach us that living a Godly life is a balance between making plans yourself and being willing to forgo those plans for God's. Ask the men if they have ever consciously gone in their own direction.*) Looking back over your life, can you begin to see how God has been with you, guiding you at certain places in your life? (*Leader Note: It might be helpful to ask the men to think of "coincidences", or times when things just "lined up" perfectly in their lives and then reflect on whether or not it might have been part of God's plan.*)

Related Scripture: Jeremiah 1:5 – God's plan for a life

- *Where we're going: God's plan.* Many people never stop to reflect on the truth that God actually has a plan for each person's life. In this discussion we want to explore how this is true in each of our lives and help each other begin to see the evidence of God's plan for them.
- *Going Deeper:* Many times life is so confusing that to think that it is part of God's plan seems ridiculous. Now read Acts 2:22-24 and reflect as a group on how the crucifixion of Jesus was God's explicit plan and yet at the time it looked like an utter defeat. Has there been a time in your life or the life of someone you know that looked like a disaster yet good came of

it? As a group, brainstorm some possibilities of how God could bring good out of a seemingly difficult/disastrous situation?

- David said that with every movie he produces he has a group of people he calls the “prayer warriors” that pray each day on the set for each scene as they shoot. He attributes the success and acceptance of his movies to them. What do you think of that statement? What are your thoughts on prayer in general? Do you think that prayer actually has an impact on life, or does it just make people feel better? Do you believe that all those “coincidences” that David spoke of are correctly attributed to prayer? As a group, share with each other the place of prayer in your life. How often do you pray? How much do you depend on prayer? Have you or someone you know ever had an experience like David where prayer was specifically answered? **Related Scripture: James 5:16 – The Power of prayer**

- *Where we’re going: The Power of prayer.* In this section, we want to lead men to begin to understand the centrality and power of prayer in their walk with God.
- *Going Deeper:* Read Proverbs 16:33. David told the story of a day on the set of the movie *Courageous* when they could not shoot a scene because they needed a forklift. There just happened to be a man in that small town who owned one right next to where they were shooting. Have you ever had an experience like this in your life? Was it just a coincidence, or something more? Has anyone in the group ever known someone who prayed and it was directly answered? *Deeper yet:* David said at one point in his talk that he prayed, but also felt he had to “figure things out for God”. In other words, he prayed but really thought he had to make things happen. Read Proverbs 16:9. Discuss the balance between only praying and trusting God and praying and working to make things happen. Where is the line between trusting and not trusting God?

Closing Prayer

Lord, I confess that I sometimes put my plans, my dreams and my priorities above everything and everyone else. Please begin to give me eyes to see your plan for my life and help me to be humble enough to follow where you lead. Begin to replace my will with yours, O God. Amen.