

The Pillow & The Promise

Goal

To discover what it means to “commit our way to God.”

Conversation Starters

- If you were about to marry someone you didn't know very well, which of these three conversation topics would be most important to you?
 - Do you fold your toilet paper?
 - How often do you wash your clothes?
 - Is it acceptable to drink out of the milk carton?
- Pastor Steven shared his feelings about decorative pillows. Do you like decorative pillows? Why or why not?

Review

Start by checking on how group members did with the past week's “Act On It” question (below — from Save Your Strength's discussion guide):

- Did you reach for “God's standards” this past week? What's one way you raised your standards?

Ask eGroup members to share their favorite points from the sermon, what spoke to them, a phrase or moment from the sermon they related to the most, or questions they have. If members have a hard time recalling the sermon, talk through your notes and share your favorite points.

Start with Scripture

Read Genesis 28:10-22.

Encourage your eGroup to open their Bibles to Genesis 28. Ask someone in your eGroup to read this passage.

- In verses 18 and 19, why does Jacob honor God with a pillar? How does this reveal Jacob's misunderstanding of God's presence? (*He honors God because he realizes God's presence is there — he didn't understand that God's presence is just as present in the common places as He is in dedicated places of worship.*)
- In verses 20 and 22, what's the problem with Jacob's vow? How does his promise set himself up to possibly miss God's purpose and peace? (*Jacob says “if God will do this for me, then I will do this for Him.” He is making a deal with God. By asking God to do things his way, he is missing the opportunity to ask God to do things His own way, which would have greater purpose and peace.*)

- **Take It Further:** now look at Romans 8:28. What does “purpose” mean in this passage? Was Jacob looking for God’s purpose in Genesis 28:20-22? (*Purpose here means seeking God’s will, God’s way. In the Genesis passage, Jacob is asking for God’s help in doing things his own way.*)

Make It Personal

- What’s something that was hard when you went through it, but later you found out it had a purpose that helped you? How did realizing that bring you peace?
- Sometimes we wait for God to provide purpose. How can **you** give purpose to things you see as common, like conflicts, struggles, pain, controversy, etc.?
- Has God’s purpose ever found you when you weren’t looking for it? Talk about it.
- How does it change your perspective to know that every place has God’s purpose in it?
- How can faith help you see God’s purpose in every difficult situation? Why does this bring greater peace?
- What are some ways this week that you can look for God’s purpose in your life? How can doing this help you have more peace?

Act On It

- This week, **purpose** is “your gate.” How can you get in that gate this week? Identify one challenge or situation in which you can pursue God’s purpose — His will and His way — and take your position in that gate.

Praise Reports, Prayer Requests, and Prayer

Ask eGroup members to share any prayer requests they have. Record any notes or prayer requests to pray for members during the week.

Dear Lord, thank You for the purpose You have for our lives. Show us the places where we are missing Your purpose and help us to seek it above everything else. Give us greater peace and strength as we seek to commit ourselves to Your ways. In Jesus’ name, amen.