



***Week Six:*** Raising a Shining Star

Text: Philippians 2:12-18

There is so much that inspires fear for parents, including the choices our kids can potentially make. Will they be governed by peer-pressure and a desire to fit in, or by a love for and a desire to please God? We may not recognize that WE face similar choices ourselves. While we want our kids to stand out and be different from their peers when their “fitting in” will embarrass us, we often make parenting choices based on how our peers are raising their kids which is often motivated by fear (of harm, missing out, or failure). God-centered parenting may look counter-cultural, radical, or weird. If we want our kids to be “shining stars” in a way that honors God, it starts with us asking ourselves some hard questions. What do we treasure? In what world do WE want to shine? Who do we want to impress? Are we living for temporary happiness or eternal joy?

*A note to small group leaders:*

*If you have people who are not parents or are not currently raising their kids, be sure to ask them their thoughts and feelings each week. Be aware that there may be pain in this discussion for those experiencing fertility struggles or who have a strained relationship with their adult kids, for example. Depending on the stage of life of your group members, you may have to think creatively about how to help your group members apply this series to themselves. This week focus on personal choices based*

*on “working out our salvation with fear and trembling.” How can we follow God in a radical counter-cultural way that’s God-focused rather than fear-based?*

*The following questions are based on the “My Application” guide on the back of the sermon notes in the bulletin. Feel free to revise or customize them according to your group’s needs.*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Icebreaker: Have each group member jot down their top 5 most important things. Then ask them to circle “the big one” and share with the group.
2. Does that thing you treasure most influence how you spend your time? Does your daily schedule reflect your “true” priorities? Be specific.
3. Read Philippians 2:12-16. What impresses you most in this passage? Why?
4. Read Daniel 12:2-3. When you think of raising a shining star, why would the stage matter?
5. What stage are you living for today? (Who is your “audience”?)
6. Does being happy sound like a good life goal? Why?
7. What perspective do the following passages provide on happiness? Why is joy a better goal? (John 16:33; 2 Timothy 3:12; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 4:13; and Philippians 2:17-18)

### **Application:**

God-centered parenting says, “If I can teach you and show you (by my example) to love and trust God and to follow His ways, you will thrive and be fearless in an evil and difficult world.”

- Whether you are a parent or not, who are you teaching to love and trust God and to follow His ways? Are you demonstrating how to do so by your example as well as your words?
- How might “What’s After ATX” give you opportunities to be more purposeful about helping the people you influence follow Christ?

**Prayer:**

Have each group member identify someone whose spiritual development they have the potential to impact—especially people far from God. As a group, pray for opportunities to engage these friends in “What’s after ATX?” discussions.

**Scripture Memory:**

*“...so that you may become blameless and pure,  
children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation,  
in which you shine like stars in the universe...”*

*Philippians 2:15*