



# SUMMER AT ENCOUNTER

## SEARCH LESSONS

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### MESSAGE NOTES

*Plans are worthless, planning is everything.* — General Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Letter to a U.S. Diplomat*

**1. Embrace the paradox of planning and surrender.**

*Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans.* — Proverbs 16:3

*In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.* — Proverbs 16:9

*And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God in this great and noble undertaking.*

— General Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Letter to D-Day soldiers*

**2. Immerse yourself in God's Word and you will grow.**

*Let My teaching fall like rain  
and My words descend like dew,  
like showers on new grass,  
like abundant rain on tender plants.*

— Deuteronomy 32:2

**3. Let the Lord capture your heart.**

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge.*

— Ephesians 3:17b–19a

**4. When He changes your plans, trust Him.**

*Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all of your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.* — Proverbs 3:5–6

**5. Allow the Lord help you let go of your worldly thoughts and ways.**

*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.* — Isaiah 55:8–9

**6. Because that's how Jesus taught us to pray.**

*Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. This, then, is how you should pray:* — Matthew 6:8b–9a

*Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

— Matthew 6:9b–13



## DISCUSSION

- Talk about a time when your plans were interrupted, and then you later saw God's plan in it.
- Have you ever really immersed yourself in study of the Bible, above and beyond your normal devotionals? How did God work in your life during that time?
- We are in a drought, and know the problems that can cause. Reread the verse from Deuteronomy, and remember the Hebrews were surrounded by desert. Talk about the metaphor of God's teaching falling on us like abundant rain on tender plants, to a people who lived in a desert and knew they relied on God for water.
- Why do you think God banned eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge? Did He want us to not understand? Or did He just want us to put His instructions and love of God first?
- We all develop personal preferences in our lives. Think of some examples of how personal preferences or worldly influences sometimes get in the way of God's plan for us.
- Have you felt that something in your life was a miracle? It doesn't have to be a spectacular supernatural event — perhaps just some provision God made in your life that was so unlikely that it seemed miraculous.
- Are there things you read in the Bible that make you go "huh?" How do you develop a deep faith that says "I believe it all," even the parts that may conflict with a worldly view? — or some things that even seem to conflict internally? Can you have faith to believe, say, that there is one God, and that He is three persons?
- Jesus acknowledges that the Father knows what we need before we ask. So why pray?
- When Jesus taught us to pray, why do you think He told us to pray that the Father's will be done? Why, when it came to our needs, do you think He asked us to pray just for daily bread? Why is more of His prayer that we flee from sin, and to ask for forgiveness, and to forgive others?