

TRITE, *not* TRUE

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rightnow MEDIA

SESSION 3: “Let go, and let God”

► SERIES RECAP

You and I are swimming in a culture full of opinions masquerading as wisdom. What’s worse, much of what passes as wisdom today has the ring of biblical truth. How do you tell the difference? How do we see through half-truths and self-help trends to access the deep wisdom of God’s Word and the full life found in Him alone?

Those are the questions Jarrett Stephens tackles in his series Trite, Not True – where he explores six of the most common pop philosophies that influence people’s lives today, including Christians.

As you dive in, you’ll discover how to decipher superficial insights from the real truth of God’s Word, as well as how to apply biblical wisdom to your everyday life. Because ultimately, the life of meaning and impact you long for doesn’t come from a philosophy, platitude, maxim, or mantra... but from one person, Jesus Christ.

► OPEN

(Simple intro to frame the objective of the group study, break the ice, and get people thinking)

Ask the group: Do you wish sometimes that life came with an “easy button” to solve your problems? What are some things you’d like to use the easy button on, if you had one?

If you’ve ever been to a summer camp, you’ve probably had the trust fall experience. You know it right? That exercise where you stand with your back to your group, often on some elevated platform. You simply fold your hands, close your eyes and lean back, letting your body plummet into the hopefully waiting arms of your friends.

It’s easy, it’s fun, and it teaches us that we have to do what? Trust. Nothing wrong with that lesson.

Well today we’re looking into a statement that’s prevalent in Christian circles that similarly encourages us to just sit back, relax, and trust...

“Let go and let God.”

But are we, as believers, really called to do that? Let’s dig a little deeper and see what the Bible says.

► WATCH THE VIDEO

Jarrett Says: More often than not, when we talk about letting go and letting God, we’re applying it to a situation or struggle we can’t seem to manage. As well intentioned as we are and as good as this may sound... is it good advice? Is this really the right posture to have as we face life’s unknowns and uncertainties? I think there’s a better way.

► DISCUSS (ASK YOUR GROUP):

Have you ever told yourself, or had someone else encourage you, to just let go and let God? Did you follow that advice, and if so, did it bring you peace or comfort?

What would it look like, in practice, to follow this adage?

DIG DEEPER: In Luke 12:24 Jesus tells his disciples, “Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storehouse or barn; yet God feeds them. How much more valuable you are than the birds!” He was teaching them not to worry about their needs, that God would provide. But if we read this verse out of context we’ll miss his real teaching—that we are to seek after the things of God and his kingdom. It’s not about inaction, it’s about the proper focus of our efforts.

What are some worries that pull your focus away from being about the business of God’s kingdom?

► WHAT THE WORLD SAYS

Very often our society tells you that you need to take charge of your own life. To pull yourself up by your bootstraps, not depend on others. It's about self-sufficiency and not expecting someone else to solve your problems for you.

So in this sense "Let go and let God" flies in the face of conventional wisdom. Perhaps that's why it's easy to think that it's a saying that's rooted in biblical wisdom.

But in reality, this saying originated in what is known as Keswick theology, which began and was popular in the 19th century. It taught that a person was saved and made right with God by faith, but in order to have a deeper and more full and fully victorious walk with Christ, they had to experience some sort of spiritual breakthrough at a different level.

That was accomplished by FULLY surrendering to God. In your salvation you let go and let God—and the only way to be fully sanctified and set apart was again to let go and let God.

The implication is that to grow spiritually you just sit back and let God do all the work.

What do you think might be the pitfalls of living by either of these paths (taking charge or just letting go)?

How might leaving spiritual growth up to God and doing nothing lead to frustration?

Ask Yourself: When you are faced with a challenge you must overcome, do you tend to be more prone to "take charge" of your own life, or do you try to sit back and just let God do the work?

► WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

It's important to recognize that when it comes to our salvation, there is truly nothing we can do. The scripture is very clear that in our sin, we are helpless and hopeless. We HAVE to let go and let God because salvation is ALL on him. So, when it comes to salvation, yes, we "let go and let God."

But what does the Bible say about the process of spiritual growth? What about how we are to deal with difficult situations and hurt? Let's explore each of these.

Spiritual growth is not a hands-off process.

Ask a participant to read Phil. 2:12-13

In the video, Jarrett says that the phrase "work out" used in this passage refers to labor and sweat. The image is of hard physical work.

What is significant about thinking about spiritual growth as a process that requires sweat and hard work?

Jarret also points out that this isn't talking about working to attain salvation but working WITH God in the process of sanctification. Have you ever thought of your spiritual growth as a collaborative effort with God?

What are some ways you can "work out" your salvation? (*Leader note: In the video Jarrett mentions several ways—working to study God's Word, to pray, to be in community with other believers, spending time alone with God*)

J.I. Packer wrote in his book *In Step With The Spirit*: "**The Christian's motto should not be 'let go and let God' but 'trust God and get going!'**"

Throughout the New Testament we are encouraged to be active in our spiritual walk. We don't let go and let God when it comes to our spiritual growth—we engage spiritually and cooperate with the Holy Spirit as he shapes us to be more like Christ.

Have participants read the following passages aloud to the group:

- Hebrews 12:1
- Ephesians 6:10-18

What is some of the imagery you can identify in these passages that helps you see spiritual growth as a process you actively participate in?

Why might it be encouraging to view your sanctification as something at which you work hard?

IDENTIFY THE TENSION: Doing it all yourself isn't possible—but just sitting back and letting God do all the heavy lifting isn't the right way either. The tension is this: how do we work actively without thinking we're earning favor with God, and how do we discern what is ours to do and what God will handle?
